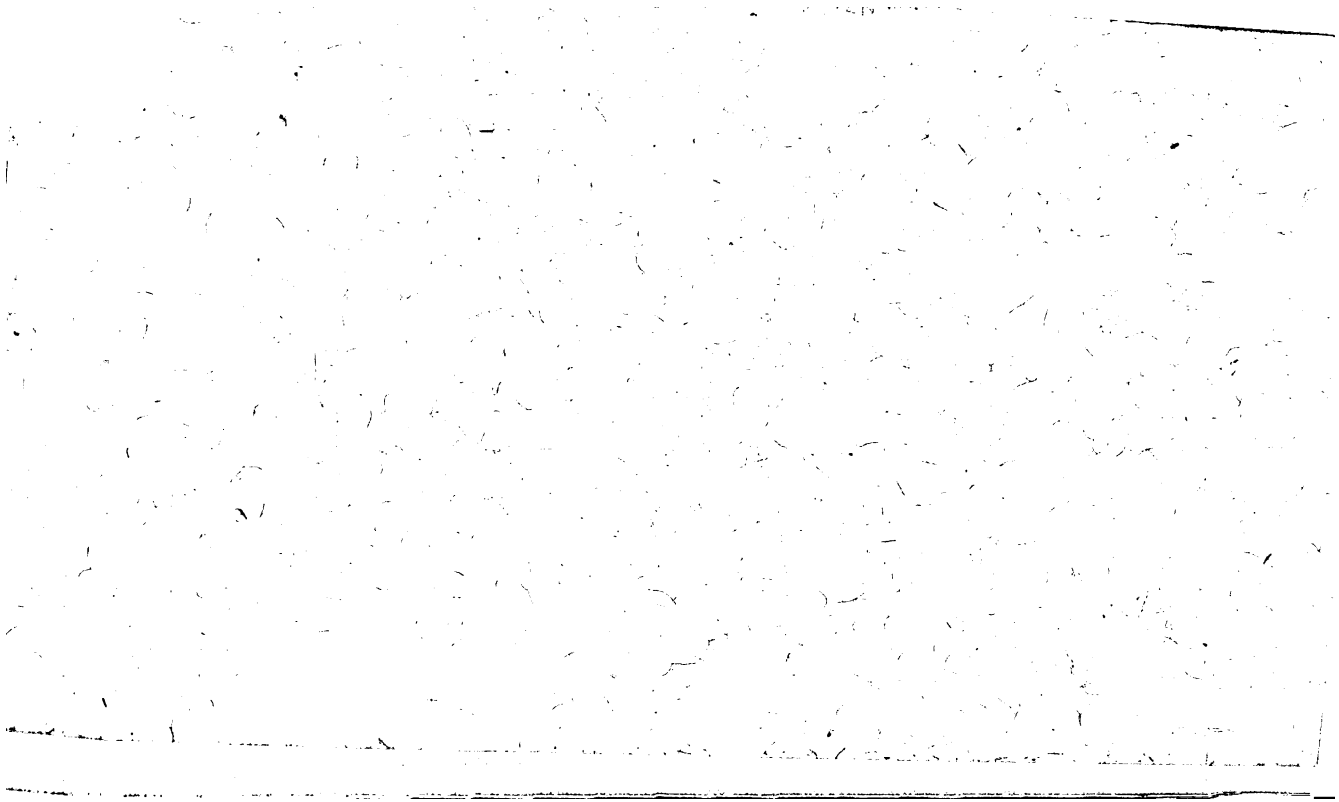

MORAL AND POLITICAL DIALOGUES;

WITH

LETTERS ON CHIVALRY AND ROMANCE:

BY

THE REVEREND DOCTOR HURD.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

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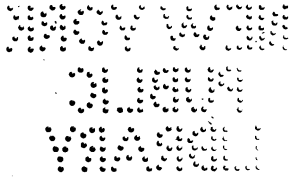

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PREFACE,

PREFACE,

ON THE

MANNER OF WRITING DIALOGUE.

THE former editions of theſe Dialogues were given without a name, and under the fictitious perſon of an Editor: not, the reader may be ſure, for any purpoſe ſo ſilly as that of impoſing on the Public; but for reaſons of another kind, which it is not difficult to apprehend.

HOWEVER, theſe reaſons, whatever they were, ſubſiſting no longer, the writer is now to appear in his

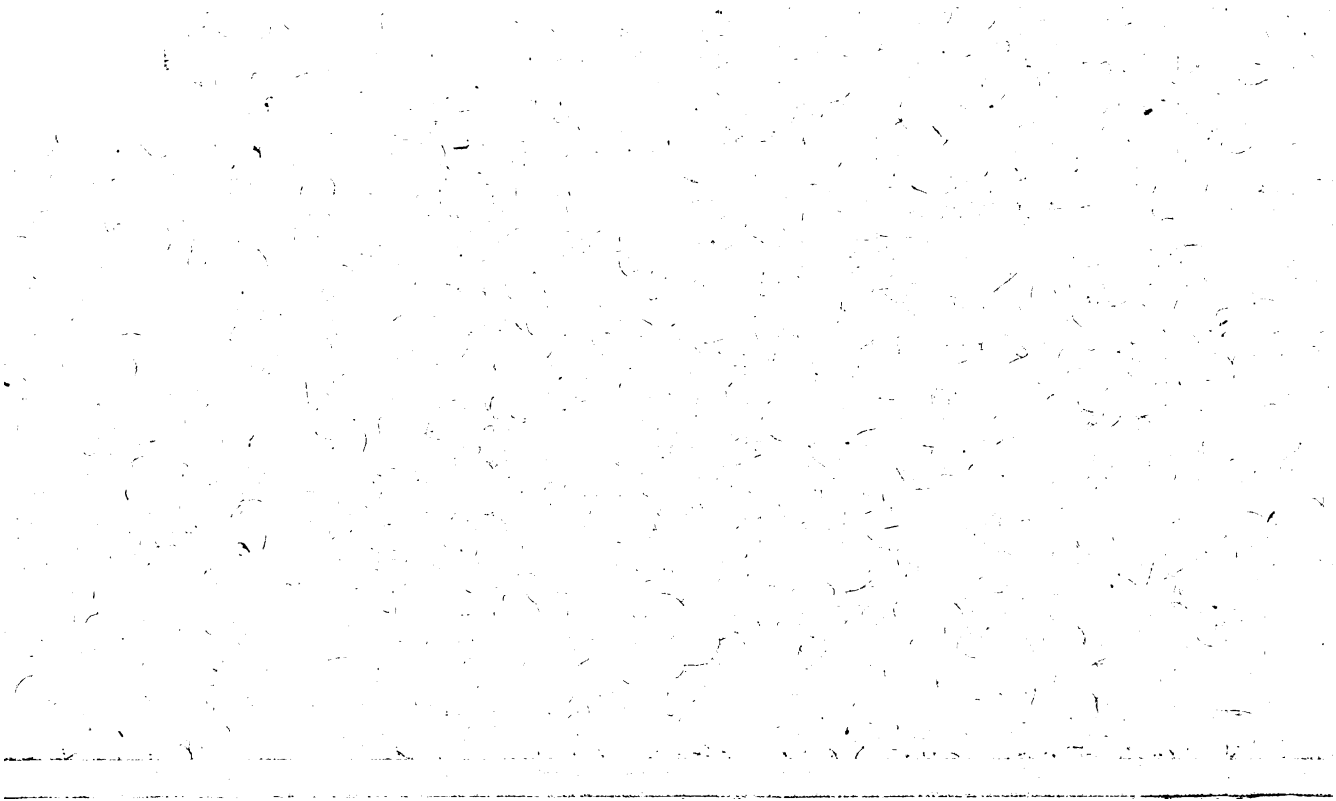
own perſon; and the reſpect, he owes to the public, makes him think it fit to beſpeak their acceptance of theſe volumes in another manner, than he ſuppoſed would be readily permitted to him, under his aſſumed character.

I. In an age, like this, when moſt men ſeem ambitious of turning writers, many perſons may think it ſtrange that the kind of compoſition, which was chiefly in uſe among the maſters of this numerous and ſtirring family, hath been hitherto neglected.

When the ANTIENTS had any thing —

"But what, it will be ſaid, always the *Antients?* And are we never

"never to take a pen in hand, but "the firſt queſtion muſt ſtill be, "what our maſters, the antients, "have been pleaſed to dictate to "us? ONE man underſtands, that "the antient Ode was diſtinguiſh-"ed into ſeveral parts, called by I "know not what ſtrange names; "and then truly an Engliſh Ode "muſt be tricked out in the ſame "fantaſtic manner. ANOTHER has "heard of a wiſe, yet merry, com-"pany called a Chorus, which was "always ſinging or preaching in "the Greek Tragedies; and then, "beſure, nothing will ſerve but we "muſt be ſung and preached to, "in ours. While a THIRD, is "ſmitten with a tedious long-wind-"ed thing, which was once en-"dured under the name of Dia-



Nobody, I ſuppoſe, objects to this practice, when important truths indeed are to be taught, and when the abilities of the Teacher are ſuch as may command reſpect. But the caſe is different, when writers preſume to try their hands upon us, without theſe advantages. Nay, and even with them, it can do no hurt, when the ſubject is proper for familiar diſcourſe, to throw it into this gracious and popular form.

I HAVE ſaid, *where the ſubject is proper for familiar diſcourſe*; for all ſubjects, I think, cannot, or ſhould not, be treated in this way.

IT is true, the inquiſitive genius of the Academic Philoſophy gave great

great ſcope to the freedom of debate. Hence the origin of the Greek Dialogue: of which if PLATO was not the Inventor, he was, at leaſt, the Model.

THIS ſceptical humour was preſently much increaſed; and every thing was now diſputed, not for PLATO's reaſon (which was, alſo, his maſter's) for the ſake of expoſing *Falſhood* and diſcovering *Truth*; but, becauſe it was pretended that nothing could be certainly affirmed to be either *true* or *falſe*.

AND, when afterwards CICERO, our other great maſter of Dialogue, introduced this ſort of writing into *Rome*, we know that, beſides his profeſſion

profeſſion of the Academic Sect, now extended and indeed outraged into abſolute ſcepticiſm, the very purpoſe he had in philoſophizing, and the rhetorical uſes to which he put his Philoſophy, would determine him very naturally to the ſame practice.

THUS all ſubjects, of what nature and importance ſoever, were equally diſcuſſed in the antient Dialogue; till matters were at length brought to that paſs, that the only end, propoſed by it, was to ſhew the writer's dexterity in diſputing for, or againſt any opinion, without referring his diſputation to any certain uſe or concluſion at all.

SUCH

SUCH was the character of the antient, and eſpecially of the Ciceronian Dialogue; ariſing out of the genius and principles of thoſe times.

BUT for us to follow our maſters in this licence would be, indeed, to deſerve the objected charge of *ſervile Imitators*; ſince the reaſons, that led them into it, do not ſubſiſt in our caſe. They diſputed every thing, becauſe they believed nothing. We ſhould forbear to diſpute ſome things, becauſe they are ſuch as, both for their ſacredneſs, and certainty, no man in his ſenſes affects to diſbelieve. At leaſt, the Stoic BALBUS may teach us a decent reſerve in *one* inſtance, *Since*, as he obſerves, *it is a wicked and impious*

impious cuſtom to diſpute againſt the Being, Attributes, and Providence of God, whether it be under an aſſumed character, or in one's own [*a*].

THUS much I have thought fit to ſay, to prevent miſtakes, and to ſhew of what kind the ſubjects are which may be allowed to enter into modern Dialogue. They are only ſuch, as are either, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word, *not* important, and yet afford an ingenuous pleaſure in the diſcuſſion of them; or not ſo important as to exclude the ſceptical inconcluſive air, which the decorum of polite dialogue neceſſarily demands.

[*a*] Mala et impia conſuetudo eſt contra Deos diſputandi, ſive ex animo id fit, ſive ſimulatè. *De Nat. D.* l. ii. c. 67.

AND,

AND, under theſe reſtrictions, we may treat a number of curious and uſeful ſubjects, in this form. The benefit will be that which the antients certainly found in this practice, and which the great maſter of life finds in the general way of candour and politeneſs,

— parcentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas conſultò —

FOR, though Truth be not formally delivered in Dialogue, it may be inſinuated; and a capable writer will find means to do this ſo effectually as, in diſcuſſing both ſides of a queſtion, to engage the reader inſenſibly on that ſide, where the Truth lies.

II. BUT

II. BUT *convenience* is not the only conſideration. The NOVELTY of the thing, itſelf, may well recommend it to us.

FOR, when every other ſpecies of compoſition has been tried, and men are grown ſo faſtidious as to receive with indifference the beſt modern productions, on account of the too common form, into which they are caſt, it may ſeem an attempt of ſome merit to revive the only one, almoſt, of the antient models, which hath not yet been made cheap by vulgar imitation.

I CAN imagine the reader will conceive ſome ſurprize, and, if he be not a candid one, will perhaps expreſs

expreſs ſome diſdain, at this pretence to Novelty, in cultivating the *Dialogue-form.* For what, he will ſay, has been more frequently aimed at in our own, and every modern language? Has not every art, nay, every ſcience, been taught in this way? And, if the vulgar uſe of any mode of writing be enough to diſcredit it, can there be room even for wit and genius to retrieve the honour of this trite and hackneyed form?

THIS, no doubt, may be ſaid; but by thoſe who know little of the antient Dialogue, or who have not attended to the true manner in which the rules of good writing require it to be compoſed.

WE have what are called Dialogues in abundance; and the authors, for any thing I know, might pleaſe themſelves with imagining, they had copied PLATO or CICERO. But in our language, at leaſt (and, if I extended the obſervation to the other modern ones of moſt eſtimation, I ſhould perhaps do them no wrong) I know of nothing in the way of Dialogue that deſerves to be conſidered by us with ſuch regard.

THERE are in Engliſh THREE Dialogues, and but Three, that are fit to be mentioned on this occaſion: all of them excellently well compoſed in their way, and, it muſt be owned, by the very beſt and politeſt

politeſt of our writers. And had that way been the true one, I mean that which antiquity and good criticiſm recommend to us, the public had never been troubled with this attempt from me, to introduce another.

THE Dialogues I mean are, *The Moraliſts of Lord* SHAFTESBURY; *Mr.* ADDISON'S *Treatiſe on Medals; and the Minute Philoſopher of Biſhop* BERKELY: and, where is the modeſty, it will be ſaid, to attempt the Dialogue-form, if it has not ſucceeded in ſuch hands?

THE anſwer is ſhort, and, I hope, not arrogant. Theſe applauded perſons ſuffered themſelves to be miſled by modern practice; and,

with every ability to excel in this nice and difficult compoſition, have written beneath themſelves, only becauſe they did not keep up to the antient ſtandard.

AN eſſential defect runs through them all. They have taken for their ſpeakers, not real, but *fictitious* characters; contrary to the practice of the old writers; and to the infinite diſadvantage of this mode of writing, in every reſpect.

THE love of truth, they ſay, is ſo natural to the human mind that we expect to find the appearance of it, even in our amuſements. In ſome indeed, the ſlendereſt ſhadow of it will ſuffice: in others, we require to have the ſubſtance

ſtance preſented to us. In all caſes, the degree of probability is to be eſtimated from the nature of the work. Thus, for inſtance, when a writer undertakes to inſtruct or entertain us in the way of Dialogue, he obliges himſelf to keep up to the *idea*, at leaſt, of what he profeſſes. The converſation may not have *really* been ſuch as is repreſented; but we expect it to have all the *forms* of reality. We bring with us a diſpoſition to be deceived (for we know his purpoſe is not to recite hiſtorically, but to feign probably;) but it looks like too great an inſult on our underſtandings, when the writer ſtands upon no ceremony with us, and refuſes to be at the expence of a little art or management to deceive us.

HENCE the probabilities, or, what is called the *decorum*, of this compoſition. We aſk, "Who the perſons are, that are going to converſe before us:" "where and when the converſation paſſed:" and "by what means the company came together." If we are let into none of theſe particulars, or, rather if a way be not found to ſatisfy us in all of them, we take no intereſt in what remains; and give the ſpeakers, who in this caſe are but a ſort of Puppets, no more credit, than the opinion we chance to entertain of their Prompter, demands from us.

ON the other hand, when *ſuch* perſons are brought into the ſcene as

are well known to us, and are entitled to our reſpect, and but ſo much addreſs employed in ſhewing them as may give us a colourable pretence to ſuppoſe them really converſing together, the writer himſelf diſappears, and is even among the firſt to fall into his own deluſion. For thus CICERO himſelf repreſents the matter:

"THIS way of diſcourſe, ſays he, "which turns on the authority of "real perſons, and thoſe the moſt "eminent of former times, is, I "know not how, more intereſting "than any other: in ſo much that "in reading my own Dialogue on "*old age* I am ſometimes ready "to conclude, in good earneſt, it

" is not I, but CATO himſelf, who " is there ſpeaking [*b*]."

So complete a deception, as this, requires the hand of a maſter. But ſuch CICERO was; and had it been his deſign to make the higheſt encomium of his own Dialogues, he could not, perhaps, have done it ſo well by any other circumſtance.

BUT now this advantage is wholly loſt by the introduction of *fictitious perſons*. Theſe may do in *Comedy*; nay, they do the beſt there, where *character* only, or chiefly, is

[*b*] Genus hoc ſermonum, poſitum in hominum veterum auctoritate, et eorum illuſtrium, plus neſcio quo pacto videtur habere gravitatis. Itaque ipſe mea legens, ſic afficior interdum, ut Catonem, non me loqui exiſtimem. CIC. *De Amit.* c. 1.

deſigned,

deſigned. In *Dialogue*, we muſt have real perſons, and thoſe only: for character here is but a ſecondary conſideration; and there is no other way of giving weight and authority to the converſation of the piece.

AND here, again, CICERO may inſtruct us; who was ſo ſcrupulous on this head that he would not put his diſcourſe on *old age* into the mouth of TITHONUS, although a Greek writer of name had ſet him the example, *becauſe*, as he obſerves, *a fabulous perſon would have had no great authority* [*c*]. What then would he have ſaid of merely fancied and *ideal* perſons, who have

[*c*] Omnem ſermonem tribuimus non Tithono, ut Ariſto Chius; *parum enim eſſet auctoritatis in fabulâ.* De Senect. c. 1.

not ſo much as that ſhadowy exiſtence, which the plauſibility of a current tale beſtows?

When I ſay that *character is but a ſecondary conſideration* in Dialogue, the reader ſees I confine myſelf to that ſpecies only, which was in uſe among the *antients*, properly ſo called; and of which Plato and Cicero have left us the beſt models.

It is true, in later times, a great wit took upon him to extend the province of Dialogue, and, like another Prometheus [*d*], (as, by an equivocal ſort of compliment, it ſeems, was obſerved of him) created

[*d*] See the Dialogue entitled, Πρὸς τὸν ἀπόλλ. ΠΡΟΜΗΘΕΥΣ εἶ ἐν λόγοις.

a new

a new ſpecies; the merit of which conſiſts in aſſociating two things, not naturally allied together, *The ſeverity of philoſophic Dialogue, with the humour of the Comic.*

BUT as unnatural as the alliance may ſeem, this ſort of compoſition has had its admirers. In particular, ERASMUS was ſo taken with LUCIAN's Dialogue, that he has tranſfuſed its higheſt graces into his own; and employed thoſe fine arms to better purpoſe againſt the Monks, than the forger of them had done, againſt the Philoſophers.

IT muſt further be confeſſed, that this innovation of the Greek writer had ſome countenance from the genius of the old Socratic Dialogue; ſuch

ſuch I mean as it was in the hands of SOCRATES himſelf [e]; who took his name of IRONIST from the continued humour and ridicule, which runs through his moral diſcourſes. But, beſides that the Athenian's modeſt IRONY was of another taſte, and better ſuited to the decorum of converſation, than the Syrian's frontleſs buffoonery, there was this further difference in the two caſes. SOCRATES employed this method of ridicule, as the only one by which he could hope to diſcredit thoſe mortal foes of reaſon, the SOPHISTS: LUCIAN, in mere wantonneſs, to inſult its beſt friends, the PHILOSOPHERS, and even the parent of Phi-

[e] Ἐπαιζεν ἅμα παιδιζων. Xen. Mem. l. i. c. 3.

loſophy,

loſophy, himſelf. The Sage would have dropped his IRONY, in the company of the good and wiſe: The Rhetorician, is never more pleaſed than in confounding both, by his intemperate SATIRE.

HOWEVER, there was likeneſs enough in the features of each *manner*, to favour LUCIAN's attempt in compounding his new Dialogue. He was not diſpleaſed, one may ſuppoſe, to turn the comic art of SOCRATES againſt himſelf; though he could not but know that the ableſt maſters of the Socratic ſchool employed it ſparingly; and that, when the illuſtrious Roman came to philoſophize in the way of Dialogue, he diſdained to make any uſe of it, at all.

In a word, as it was taken up, to ſerve an occaſion, ſo it was very properly laid aſide, with it. And even while the occaſion laſted, this humorous manner was far enough, as I obſerved, from being puſhed to a Scenic licence; the great artiſts in this way knowing very well, that, when SOCRATES brought Philoſophy from Heaven to Earth, it was not his purpoſe to expoſe her on the ſtage, but to introduce her into good company.

AND here, to note it by the way, what has been obſerved of the Ironic manner of the Socratic Dialogue, is equally true of its *ſubtle queſtioning dialectic genius*. This, too, had its riſe from the circumſtances

ſtances of the time, and the views of its author, who employed it with much propriety and even elegance to entrap, in their own cobweb nets, the minute, quibbling, captious ſophiſts. How it chanced that this part of its character did not, alſo, ceaſe with its uſe, but was continued by the ſucceſſors in that ſchool, and even carried ſo far as to provoke the ridicule of the wits, till, at length, it brought on the juſt diſgrace of the Socratic Dialogue itſelf, all this is the proper ſubject of another inquiry.

Our concern, at preſent, is with Lucian's Dialogue; whether he were indeed the inventor of this ſpecies,

ſpecies, or, after SOCRATES, only the eſpouſer of it.

THE account, given above, that *it unites and incorporates the ſeveral virtues of the Comic and Philoſophic manner*, is in LUCIAN's own words [*f*]. Yet his Dialogue does not, as indeed it could not, correſpond exactly to this idea. CICERO thought it no eaſy matter to unite *Philoſophy, with Politeneſs and Good-humour* [*g*]: what then would he have ſaid of incorporating *Philoſophy, with Comic Ridicule?*

To do him juſtice, LUCIAN himſelf appears ſenſible enough of the

[*f*] Γέλωῖα κωμικὸν ὑπὸ ζεμνότητι φιλοσόφῳ. Προμηθ. c. 7.

[*g*] Difficillimam illam ſocietatem *Gravitatis cum Humanitate*. *Leg.* l. iii. c. 1.

difficulty.

difficulty. *I have preſumed,* ſays he, *to connect and put together two things, not very obſequious to my deſign, nor diſpoſed by any natural ſympathy to bear the ſociety of each other* [*b*]. And therefore we find him on all occaſions more ſollicitous for the ſucceſs of this hazardous enterprize, than for the credit of his invention. Every body was ready to acknowledge the novelty of the thing; but he had ſome reaſon to doubt with himſelf, whether it were gazed at as a monſter, or admired as a juſt and reaſonable form of compoſition. So that not

[*b*] Ἐτολμήσαμεν ἡμεῖς τὰ ἔτως ἔχοντα πρὸς ἄλληλα ξυναγαγεῖν ἢ ξυναρμόσαι, ἃ πάνυ πειθόμενα, ἃδὲ ὑμαρῶς ἀνεχόμενα τὴν κοινωνίαν. Προμηθ. c. 7.

being

being able to resolve this scruple, to his satisfaction, he extricates himself, as usual, from the perplexity, by the force of his comic humour; and concludes at length, *that he had nothing left for it but to persevere in the choice he had once made*; that is, to preserve the credit of his *own* consistency at least, if he could not prevail to have his Dialogue accepted by the judicious reader, under the idea [*i*] of a consistent *composition*.

THE ingenious writer had, surely, no better way to take, in his distress. For the two excellencies, he meant to incorporate in his Dialogue, cannot, in a supreme degree

[*i*] Προμηθ. c. 7. to the end. Δὶς κατηγορέμενος. c. 33. and Ζεῦξις.

of

of each, ſubſiſt together. The one muſt be ſacrificed to the other. Either the philoſophic part muſt give place to the dramatic; or the dramatic muſt withdraw, or reſtrain itſelf at leaſt, to give room for a juſt diſplay of the philoſophic.

AND this, in fact, as I obſerved, is the caſe in LUCIAN'S own Dialogues. They are highly dramatic, in which part his force lay; while his Philoſophy ſerves only to edge his wit, or ſimply to introduce it. They have, uſually, for their ſubject, not, a QUESTION DEBATED; but, a TENET RIDICULED, or, a CHARACTER EXPOSED. In this view, they are doubtleſs inimitable: I mean when he kept himſelf, as too frequently he did not, to ſuch

tenets or *characters*, as deſerve to be treated in this free manner.

But after all, the other ſpecies, the *ſerious*, *philoſophic* Dialogue, is the nobleſt and the beſt. It is the *nobleſt*, in all views; for the dignity of its ſubject, the gravity of its manner, and the importance of its end. It is the *beſt*, too; I mean, it excels moſt in the very truth and art of compoſition; as it governs itſelf entirely by the rules of decorum, and gives a juſt and faithful image of what it would repreſent: whereas the comic Dialogue, diſtorting, or, at leaſt, aggravating the features of its original, pleaſes at ſome expence of probability; and at length attains its end but in part, for want of *dramatic action*, the only medium,

medium, through which *humour* can be perfectly conveyed.

THUS, the ſerious Dialogue is abſolute in itſelf; and fully obtains its purpoſe: the humorous or characteriſtic, but partially; and is, at beſt, the faint copy of a higher ſpecies, the *Comic Drama*.

HOWEVER, the authority of LUCIAN is ſo great, and the manner itſelf ſo taking, that for theſe reaſons, but chiefly for the ſake of variety, the FIRST of the following Dialogues (and in part too, the SECOND) pretends to be of this claſs.

BUT to return to our proper ſubject, THE SERIOUS OR PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE.

1. I OBSERVED (and the reaſon now appears) that *character* is a ſubordinate conſideration, in this Dialogue. The *manners* are to be given indeed, but ſparingly, and, as it were, by accident. And this grace (which ſo much embelliſhes a well-compoſed work) can only be had by employing REAL, KNOWN, and RESPECTED ſpeakers. Each of theſe circumſtances, in the choice of a ſpeaker, is important. The *firſt*, excites our curioſity: the *ſecond*, affords an eaſy opportunity of painting the manners by thoſe ſlight and careleſs ſtrokes, which alone can be employed for this purpoſe, and which would not ſufficiently mark the characters of unknown or fictitious perſons: and the *laſt*, gives weight and dignity to the whole compoſition.

By

By this means, the dialogue becomes, in a high degree, natural and, on that account, affecting: a thouſand fine and delicate alluſions to the principles, ſentiments, and hiſtory of the Dialogiſts keep their characters perpetually in view: we have a rule before us, by which to eſtimate the pertinence and propriety of what is ſaid: and we are pleaſed to bear a part, as it were, in the converſation of ſuch perſons.

Thus the old writers of Dialogue charm us, even when their ſubjects are unpleaſing and could hardly merit our attention: but when the topics are of general and intimate concern to the reader, by being diſcuſſed in this form, they create in him the keeneſt appetite; and are, perhaps, read with a higher pleaſure,

than we receive from moſt other compoſitions of literary men.

2. It being now apprehended what *perſons* are moſt fit to be ſhewn in Dialogue, the next inquiry will be, concerning their *ſtyle or manner of expreſſion.* And this, in general, muſt be ſuited to the condition and qualities of the perſons themſelves: that is, it muſt be grave, polite, and ſomething raiſed above the ordinary pitch or tone of converſation; for, otherwiſe, it would not agree to the ideas we form of the ſpeakers, or to the regard we owe to *real, known,* and *reſpected* perſons, ſeriouſly debating, as the philoſophic dialogue imports in the very terms, on ſome uſeful or important ſubject.

Thus

THUS far the caſe is plain enough. The concluſion flows, of itſelf, from the very idea of a philoſophic converſation between ſuch men.

BUT as it appeared that the ſpeaker's *proper manners* are to be given, in this Dialogue, it may be thought (and, I ſuppoſe, commonly is thought) that the ſpeaker's *proper ſtyle or expreſſion* ſhould be given, too.

HERE the ſubject begins to be a little nice; and we muſt diſtinguiſh between the *general caſt* of expreſſion, and its *ſmaller and more peculiar features.*

As to the *general caſt or manner of ſpeaking*, it may be well to preſerve ſome reſemblance of it; for it reſults ſo immediately from the

ſpeaker's character, and ſometimes makes ſo eſſential a part of it, that the *manners* themſelves cannot, otherwiſe, be ſufficiently expreſſed.

ACCORDINGLY CICERO tells us, that, in his Dialogues of the *complete Orator*, he had *endeavoured to ſhadow out*, that is, give the outline, as it were, of the kind of eloquence, by which his chief ſpeakers, CRASSUS and ANTONIUS, were ſeverally diſtinguiſhed [*k*]. This attention has certainly no ill effect, when *the manners of ſpeaking*, as here, are ſufficiently diſtinct, and generally known. It was, beſides, eſſentially neceſſary in this Dialogue, where the ſubject is, of eloquence itſelf; and

[*k*] —quo in genere orationis utrumque Oratorem cognoveramus, id ipſum ſumus in eorum ſermone *adumbrare conati*. De Orat. iii. 4.

where

where the principal perſons appeared, and were accordingly to be repreſented, in the light and character of *ſpeakers*; that is, where their different kinds or manners of ſpeaking were, of courſe, to be expreſſed.

In Dialogues on other ſubjects, CICERO himſelf either neglects this rule, or obſerves it with leſs care [*l*]: and this difference of con-

[*l*] A curious paſſage, or two, in his Letters to Atticus, will ſerve to illuſtrate this obſervation. The *academic quæſtions* were drawn up, and finiſhed, when a doubt occurred to him, whether he ſhould not change one of the ſpeakers in that Dialogue, and, inſtead of Varro, introduce Brutus; who would ſuit his purpoſe, he ſaid, juſt as well, becauſe his philoſophic principles were the ſame with thoſe of Varro—*ſi addubitas*, ſays he to Atticus, *ad Brutum tranſeamus. Eſt enim is quoque Antiochius.* l. xiii. 25. Was this a change to be eaſily made, if it were neceſſary,

duct

duct is plainly juſtified, from the reaſon of the thing.

BUT now when the queſtion is, of the *ſmaller features and more peculiar qualities of ſtyle or expreſſion*, it will be found that the writer of Dialogue is under no obligation, either from the reaſon of the thing, or the beſt authorities, to affect a reſemblance of that kind.

AUTHORITIES, I think, there are none, or none at leaſt that de-

in this kind of writing, to ſuit the *ſtyle* and *manner of expreſſion* to the character of the ſpeakers? Yet, hear how negligently he treats this matter—*Opinor igitur conſideremus, etſi nomina jam facta ſunt. Sed* VEL INDUCI, VEL MUTARI POSSUNT. l. xiii. 14.—In other words, provided the *caſt* of the ſeveral parts was the ſame, the *language* of the Dialogue would require no alteration. It was indifferent, in this reſpect, who were the ſpeakers.

ſerve

ſerve to be much regarded; though I remember what has been obſerved of an inſtance or two of this ſort, in ſome of PLATO's Dialogues; where his purpoſe is, to *expoſe a character*, not to *debate a philoſophic queſtion*: and for *the impropriety of the thing itſelf*, it may appear from the following conſiderations.

IN general, the reaſon, why *character* is preſerved in this Dialogue, is, becauſe ſuch ſpeakers, as are introduced in it, cannot be ſuppoſed to converſe for any time on a ſubject of importance without diſcovering ſomething of their own *peculiar manners*; though the occaſion may not be warming enough to throw them out with that diſtinctneſs and vivacity, which we expect in the progreſs of a dramatic

tic plot. But as to the *language of converſation*, it is ſo much the ſame between perſons of education and politeneſs, that, whether the ſubject be intereſting, or otherwiſe, all that you can expect is that the *general caſt of expreſſion* will be ſomewhat tinctured by the *manners*, which ſhine through it; but by no means that the ſmaller differences, the nicer peculiarities of ſtyle, will be ſhewn.

OR, we may take the matter thus.

THE reaſon, why the *general caſt or kind of expreſſion* is different in two ſpeakers, is, becauſe their *characters* are different, too. But *character* has no manner of influence, in the eaſe and freedom of converſation,

converſation, on the *idiomatic differences* of expreſſion; which flow not from the *manners*, but from ſome degree of ſtudy and affectation, and only characterize their written and artificial works.

THUS, for inſtance, if SALLUST and CICERO had come together in converſation, the *former* would certainly have dropped his *new words and pointed ſentences:* and the *latter*, his *numerous oratorial periods*. All that might be expected to appear, is, that SALLUST's expreſſion would be ſhorter and more compact; CICERO's, more gracious and flowing, agreeably to the characters of the two men.

BUT there is a further reaſon why theſe *characteriſtic peculiarities of ſtyle* muſt not be exhibited, or muſt be infinitely reſtrained at leaſt, in the ſort of compoſition we are now conſidering. It is, that the ſtudied imitation of ſuch peculiarities would be what we call *mimicry*; and would therefore border upon *ridicule*, the thing of all others which the genius of this Dialogue moſt abhors. In Comedy itſelf, the moſt exact writers do not condeſcend to this minute imitation. TERENCE's characters all expreſs themſelves, I think, with equal elegance: even his ſlaves are made to ſpeak as good Latin, as their maſters. In the ſerious Dialogue, then, which, from its nature is, in a much lower degree, *mimetic*, that minute

minute attention can by no means be required. It will be ſufficient that the ſpeakers expreſs themſelves in *the ſame manner*, that is, (provided the *general caſt* of expreſſion be ſuited to their reſpective characters) *in the writer's own.*

IF there be any exception from this rule, it muſt be, when the peculiarities of expreſſion are ſo great, and ſo notorious, that the reader could hardly acknowledge the ſpeaker in any other dreſs, than that of his own ſtyle. Hence it is poſſible, though CICERO has left us no example of this ſort, that if, in the next age, any one had thought fit to introduce MÆCENAS into Dialogue, he might perhaps have been allowed to colour his language

language with ſome of thoſe *ſpruce turns and negligent affectations*, by which, as a writer, he was ſo well known. It is, at leaſt, on this principle that the author of the following Dialogues muſt reſt his apology for having taken ſuch liberty, in *one or two inſtances, only:* in which, however, he has confined his imitation to the ſingle purpoſe of exhibiting ſome degree of likeneſs to their acknowledged manner of expreſſion, without attempting to expoſe it in any ſtrong or invidious light. And, after all, if even this liberty, ſo cautiouſly taken, be thought too much, he will not complain of his critics; ſince the fault, if it be one, was committed rather in compliance with what he ſuppoſed might be the public judgment, than with his own.

THE

THE reader has now before him a ſketch of what I conceive to be the *character* of the antient philoſophic Dialogue; which, in one word, may be ſaid to be, "An "imitated, and mannered con- "verſation between certain real, "known, and reſpected perſons, "on ſome uſeful or ſerious ſubject, "in an elegant, and ſuitably adorn- "ed, but not characteriſtic ſtyle."

AT leaſt, I expreſs, as I can, my notion of CICERO's Dialogue, which unites theſe ſeveral characters; and, by ſuch union, has effected, as it ſeems to me, all that the nature of this compoſition requires or admits.

THIS, I am ſenſible, is ſaying but little, on the ſubject. But I pretend not to do juſtice to CICERO'S DIALOGUES; which are occaſionally ſet off by that lively, yet chaſte colouring of the *manners*, and are, beſides, all over ſprinkled with that exquiſite grace of, what the Latin writers call, *urbanity* (by which, they meant as well what was moſt polite in the *air* of converſation, as in the language of it) that there is nothing equal to them, in Antiquity itſelf: and I have ſometimes fancied, that even LIVY'S Dialogues [*l*], if they had come down to us, would perhaps have loſt ſomething, on a com-

[*l*] Scripſit enim et DIALOGOS, quos non magis philoſophiæ annumerare poſſis, quam HISTORIÆ. SENECA, EP. C.

pariſon

pariſon with theſe maſter-pieces of CICERO's pen.

3. BUT to this apology for the ancient Dialogue, I ſuſpect, it will be replied, "That though, in the hands of the Greek and Latin writers, it might, heretofore, have all this grace and merit, yet who ſhall pretend to revive it in our days? or, how ſhall we enter into the ſpirit of this compoſition, for which there is no encouragement, nor ſo much as the countenance of example in real life? No man writes well, but from his own experience and obſervation: and by whom is the way of dialogue now practiſed? or, where do we find ſuch precedents of grave and continued converſation in modern times?"

A VERY competent judge, and one too, who was himſelf, as I have obſerved, an adventurer in this claſs of compoſition, puts the objection home in the following words.

"THE truth is, ſays he, it would "be an abominable falſhood, and "belying of the age, to put ſo "much good ſenſe together in any "*one* converſation, as might make "it hold out ſteadily, and with "plain coherence, for an hour's "time, till any *one* ſubject had been "rationally examined [*m*]."

NOR is this the only difficulty. *Another* occurs, from the prevailing

[*m*] Lord SHAFTESBURY's *Moraliſts*, P. 1. S. 1.

manners

manners of modern times, which are over-run with reſpect, compliment, and ceremony. "Now put "*compliments*, ſays the ſame wri- "ter, put *ceremony* into a Dialogue, "and ſee what will be the effect! "This is the plain *dilemma* againſt "that ancient manner of writing — "if we avoid ceremony, we are "unnatural: if we uſe it, and ap- "pear as we naturally are, as we "ſalute, and meet, and treat one "another, we hate the ſight [*n*]."

THESE conſiderations are to the purpoſe; and ſhew perhaps in a mortifying manner, that the modern writers of Dialogue, the very beſt of them, cannot aſpire to the unrivalled elegance of the antient;

[*n*] *Adv. to an Author*, P. I. S. III.

as being wholly unfurniſhed of many advantages, to this end, which they enjoyed. But ſtill the *form* of writing itſelf, is neither impracticable, nor unnatural: and there are certain *means*, by which the diſadvantages, complained of, may be leſſened at leaſt, if not entirely removed.

To begin with the LAST. It is very true, that the conſtraint of a formal and ſtudied civility is foreign to the genius of this ſort of compoſition; and it is, alſo, as true, that ſomewhat of this conſtrained civility is ſcarce ſeparable from a juſt copy and faithful picture of converſation in our days. The reaſon of which is to be gathered from the nature of our policies and governments. For converſation, I mean the ſerious and manly ſort, as well

as

as eloquence, is moſt cultivated and thrives beſt amidſt the equality of conditions in republican and popular ſtates.

And, though this inconvenience be leſs perceived by us of this free country than by moſt others, yet ſomething of it will remain where-ever monarchy, with its conſequent train of ſubordinate and dependent ranks of men, ſubſiſts.

Now the proper remedy in the caſe is, to bring ſuch men only together in Dialogue as are of the ſame rank; or at leaſt to claſs our ſpeakers with ſuch care as that any great inequality in that reſpect may be compenſated by ſome other; ſuch as the ſuperiority of age, wiſdom,

talents, or the like. A Chancellor of *England* and a Country Juſtice, or even a Lord and his Chaplain, could hardly be ſhewn in Dialogue, without incurring ſome ridicule. But a Judge and a Biſhop, one would hope, might be ſafely brought together; and if a great Philoſopher ſhould enter into debate with a lettered Man of Quality, the indecorum would not be ſo violent as to be much reſented.

BUT the influence of modern manners reaches even to names and the ordinary forms of addreſs. In the Greek and Roman Dialogues, it was permitted to accoſt the greateſt perſons by their obvious and familiar appellations. ALCIBIADES had no more addition, than

SOCRATES: and BRUTUS and CÆSAR loſt nothing of their dignity from being applied to, in thoſe direct terms. The moderns, on the contrary, have their guards and fences about them; and we hold it an incivility to approach them without ſome decent periphraſis, or ceremonial title—

——— gaudent prænomine molles
Auriculæ.

IT was principally, I believe, for this reaſon that modern writers of Dialogue have had recourſe to fictitious names and characters, rather than venture on the uſe of real ones: the *former* abſolving them from this cumberſome ceremony, which, in the caſe of the *latter*, could not ſo properly be laid aſide.

PALÆMON

PALÆMON and PHILANDER, for inſtance, are not only well-ſounding words; but ſlide as eaſily into a ſentence, and as gracefully too, as CICERO and ATTICUS: while the *Mr's* and the *Sirs*, nay his *Grace*, his *Excellency*, or his *Honour* [o], of modern Dialogue, have not only a formality that hurts the eaſe of converſation, but a harſhneſs too, which is ſomewhat offenſive to a well-tuned Attic or Roman ear.

ALL this will be allowed; and yet, to ſpeak plainly and with that freedom which antient manners indulge, the barbarity of theſe forms is not worſe than the pedantry of taking ſuch diſguſt at them. And

[o] *Adv. to an Author*, P. 1. towards the end.

there

there are ways, too, by which the moſt offenſive circumſtances in this account may be ſo far qualified as to be almoſt overlooked, or at leaſt endured. What *theſe* are, the capable and intelligent reader or writer is not to be told; and none but ſuch would eaſily apprehend.

To come then to the OTHER objection of Lord SHAFTESBURY, which is more conſiderable.

IT would be a manifeſt falſhood, he thinks, and directly againſt the truth both of art and nature, to engage the moderns in a grave diſcourſe of any length. And it is true, the great men of our time do not, like the Senators of antient *Rome*, ſpend whole days in learned

debate and formal diſputation: yet their meetings, eſpecially in private parties, with their friends, are not ſo wholly frivolous, but that they ſometimes diſcourſe ſeriouſly, and even purſue a ſubject of learning or buſineſs, not with coherence only, but with ſome care. And will not this be ground enough for a capable writer to go upon, in reviving the way of Dialogue between ſuch men?

But, to give the moſt probable air to his fiction, he may find it neceſſary to recede from the ſtrict imitation of his originals, in one inſtance.

It may be adviſable not to take for his ſpeakers, *living perſons*; I mean, perſons, however reſpectable,

ble, of his own age. We may fancy of the dead, what we cannot ſo readily believe of the living. And thus, by endeavouring a little to deceive ourſelves, we may come to think that natural, which is not wholly incredible; and may admit the writer's invention for a picture, though a ſtudied and flattering one, it may be, of real life.

In ſhort, it may be a good rule in modern Dialogue, as it was in antient Tragedy, to take our ſubjects, and chooſe our perſons, out of former times. And, under the prejudice of that opinion which is readily entertained of ſuch ſubjects and characters, an artiſt may contrive to paſs that upon us for *Fact*, which was only ingenious *Fiction*;

Fiction; and ſo wind up his piece to the perfection of antient Dialogue, without departing too widely from the decorum and truth of converſation in modern life.

SUCH at leaſt is the IDEA, which the author of theſe Dialogues has formed to himſelf of the manner in which this exquiſite ſort of compoſition may be attempted by more ſucceſsful writers. For to conceive an excellence, and to copy it, he underſtands and laments, are very different things.

THURCASTON:
MDCCLXIV.

MORAL

MORAL AND POLITICAL DIALOGUES.

DIA-

DIALOGUE I.

On SINCERITY in the Commerce of the World.

DR. HENRY MORE, EDMUND WALLER, ESQ.

MR. WALLER.

ENOUGH, enough, my friend, on the good old chapter of *Sincerity and Honour*. Your rhetoric, and not your reaſoning, is too much for me. Believe it, your fine ſtoical leſſons muſt all give way to a little common ſenſe, I mean, to a prudent accommodation of ourſelves to times and circumſtances; which, whether you will dignify it with the name of philoſophy, or no, is the only method of living with credit in the world, and even with ſafety.

DR. MORE.

ACCOMMODATION is, no doubt, a good word to ſtand in the place of inſincerity. But, pray, in which of the great moral maſters have you picked up this term, and much more, the virtuous practice, it ſo well expreſſes?

MR. WALLER.

I LEARNT it from the great maſter of life, EXPERIENCE: A doctor, little heard of in the ſchools, but of more authority with men of ſenſe, than all the ſolemn talkers of the porch, or cloiſter, put together.

DR. MORE.

AFTER much reſerve, I confeſs, you begin to expreſs yourſelf very clearly. But, good Sir, not to take up your concluſion too haſtily, have the patience to hear—

MR. WALLER.

HAVE I not, then, heard, and ſure with patience enough, your ſtudied harangues

rangues on this ſubject? You have diſcourſed it, I muſt own, very plauſibly. But the impreſſion, which fine words make, is one thing, and the conviction of reaſon, another. And, not to waſte more time in fruitleſs altercation, let ME, if you pleaſe, read you a lecture of morals: not, out of ancient books, or the viſions of an unpractiſed philoſophy, but from the ſchools of buſineſs and real life. Such a view of things will diſcredit theſe high notions, and may ſerve, for the future, to amend and rectify all your ſyſtems.

DR. MORE.

COMMEND me to a man of the world, for a rectifier of moral ſyſtems!—Yet, if it were only for the pleaſure of being let into the ſecrets of this new doctrine of *Accommodation*, I am content to become a *patient* hearer, in my turn; and the rather, as the day, which, you ſee, wears apace, will hardly give leave for inter-

 ruption,

ruption, or indeed afford you time enough for the full diſplay of your wit on this extraordinary ſubject.

MR. WALLER.

WE have day enough before us, for the buſineſs in hand. 'Tis true, this wood-land walk has not the charms, which you lately beſtowed on a certain *philoſophical garden* [*a*]. But the heavens are as clear, and the air, that blows upon us, as freſh, as in that fine evening which drew your friends abroad, and engaged them in a longer debate, than that with which I am now likely to detain you. For, indeed, I have only to lay before you the reſult of my own experience and obſervation. All my arguments are plain facts, which are ſoon told, and about which there can be no diſpute. You ſhall judge for yourſelf, how far they

[*a*] The ſcene of Dr. MORE's DIVINE DIALOGUES, printed in 1668.

will

will authorize the concluſion I mean to draw from them.

THE POINT, I am bold enough to maintain againſt you philoſophers is, briefly, this; "That *ſincerity*, or a ſcrupulous "regard to *truth* in all our converſation "and behaviour, how ſpecious ſoever it "may be in theory, is a thing impoſſible "in practice; that there is no living in "the world on theſe terms; and that a "man of buſineſs muſt either quit the "ſcene, or learn to temper the ſtrictneſs "of your diſcipline with ſome reaſon-"able accommodations. It is exactly "the dilemma of the poet,

"Vivere ſi recte neſcis, diſcede peritis;

"of all which I preſume, as I ſaid, to "offer my own experience, as the ſhort-"eſt and moſt convincing demonſtration."

DR. MORE.

THE ſubject, I confeſs, is fairly delivered, and nothing can be juſter than

this appeal to experience, provided you do not attempt to delude yourſelf or me, by throwing falſe colours upon it.

MR. WALLER.

It will be your buſineſs to remonſtrate againſt theſe arts, if you diſcover any ſuch. My intention is to proceed in the way of a direct and ſimple recital.

"I was born, as you know, of a good family, and to the inheritance of this paternal ſeat [*b*], with the eaſy fortune that belongs to it. To this, I ſucceeded but too ſoon by the untimely loſs of an excellent father. His death, however, did not deprive me of thoſe advantages, which are thought to ariſe from a ſtrict and virtuous education. This care devolved on my mother, a woman of great prudence, who provided for my inſtruction in letters and every other accom-

[*b*] At Beaconsfield in *Bucks*, the ſuppoſed ſcene of the Dialogue.

pliſhment.

pliſhment. I was, of myſelf, enough inclined to books, and was ſuppoſed to have ſome parts, which deſerved cultivation. I was accordingly trained in the ſtudy of thoſe writings, which are the admiration of men of elegant minds and refined morals. I was a tolerable maſter of the languages, in which they are compoſed; and, I may venture to ſay, was at leaſt imbued with their notions and principles, if I was not able at that time to catch the ſpirit of their compoſition: all which was confirmed in me, by the conſtant attendance and admonitions of the beſt tutors, and the ſtrict diſcipline of your colleges. I mention theſe things to ſhew you, that I was not turned looſe into the world, as your complaint of men of buſineſs generally is, unprincipled and uninſtructed; and that what auſtere men might afterwards take for ſome degree of libertiniſm in my conduct, is not to be charged on the want of a ſober or even learned education."

DR. MORE.

I UNDERSTAND you mean to take no advantage of that plea, if what follows be not anſwerable to ſo high expectations.

MR. WALLER.

THE ſeaſon was now come, when my rank and fortune, together with the ſolicitations of my friends, drew me forth, though reluctantly, from the college into the world. I was then, indeed, under twenty: but ſo practiſed in the beſt things, and ſo enamoured of the moral leſſons which had been taught me, that I carried with me into the laſt parliament of king JAMES, not the ſhowy accompliſhments of learning only, but the high enthuſiaſm of a warm and active virtue. Yet the vanity, it may be, of a young man, diſtinguiſhed by ſome advantages, and conſcious enough of them, was, for a time, the leading principle with me. In this diſpoſition, it may be ſuppoſed,

poſed, I could not be long without deſiring an introduction to the court. It was not a ſchool of that virtue I had been uſed to, yet had ſome perſons in it of eminent worth and honour. A vein of poetry, which ſeemed to flow naturally from me, was that by which I ſeemed moſt ambitious to recommend myſelf [c]. And occaſions quickly offered, for that purpoſe. But this was a play of ingenuity in which the heart had no ſhare. I made complimentary verſes on the great lords and ladies of the court, with as much ſimplicity and as little meaning as my bows in the drawing room, and thought it a fine thing to be taken notice of, as a wit, in the faſhionable circles. In the mean time, the corruptions of a looſe diſorderly

[c] See his *Works*, where are ſome pieces of a very early date; though Lord CLARENDON tells us, *he was near thirty years of age, before he was much taken notice of, as a Poet.* Contin. of his Life, P. I. p. 25.

court

court gave me great ſcandal. And the abject flatteries, I obſerved in ſome of the higheſt ſtations and graveſt characters, filled me with indignation. As an inſtance of this, I can never forget the reſentment, that fired my young breaſt at the converſation you have often heard me ſay I was preſent at, betwixt the old king, and two of his court prelates [*d*]. And if the prudent and witty turn, the venerable biſhop of *Wincheſter* gave to the diſcourſe, had not atoned, in ſome meaſure, for the rank offenſive ſervility of the *other*, it had been enough to determine me, forthwith, to an implacable hatred of kings and courts for ever.

DR. MORE.

It muſt be owned the provocation was very groſs, and the offence taken at it no more, than a ſymptom of a generous and manly virtue.

[*d*] Dr. ANDREWS, biſhop of *Wincheſter*, and Dr. NEAL, biſhop of *Durham*. The ſtory is well known.

MR.

MR. WALLER.

IT left a deep impreſſion on my mind; yet it did not hinder me from appearing at court in the firſt years of the following reign, when the vanity of a thoughtleſs muſe, rather than any relaxation of my ancient manners, drew from me, again, ſome occaſional panegyries on greatneſs; which being preſented in verſe, I thought would hardly be ſuſpected of flattery.

DR. MORE.

THIS indulgence of a *thoughtleſs muſe* (as you call it) was not without its danger. I am afraid this muſt paſs for the firſt inſtance of your ſacrificing to INSINCERITY.

MR. WALLER.

YOUR fears are too haſty. This was ſtill a trial of my wit: and after a few wanton circles, as it were to breathe and exerciſe

exerciſe my muſe, I drew her in from theſe amuſements to a ſtricter manage and more ſevere diſcipline. The long interval of parliaments now followed; and in this ſuſpenſion of buſineſs I applied myſelf to every virtuous purſuit that could be likely to improve my mind, or purify my morals. Believe me, I cannot to this day, without pleaſure, reflect on the golden hours, I paſſed in the ſociety of ſuch accompliſhed men, as FALKLAND, HYDE, and CHILLINGWORTH. And, for my more retired amuſements at this place, you will judge of the good account I might render of theſe, when I add, they were conſtantly ſhared with that great prelate, who, now, with ſo much dignity, fills the throne of *Wincheſter* [*e*].

DR. MORE.

THIS enthuſiaſm of your's is catching, and raiſes in me an incredible impa-

[*e*] Dr. GEORGE MORLEY.

tience

tience to come at the triumphs of a virtue, trained and perfected in her beſt ſchool, the converſation of heroes and ſages.

MR. WALLER.

You ſhall hear. The jealouſies, that had alarmed the nation for twelve years, were now to have a vent given them, by the call of the parliament in *April* 1640. As the occaſion, on which it met, was in the higheſt degree intereſting, the aſſembly itſelf was the moſt auguſt, that perhaps had ever deliberated on public councils. There was a glow of honour, of liberty, and of virtue in all hearts, in all faces: and yet this fire was tempered with ſo compoſed a wiſdom, and ſo ſedate a courage, that it ſeemed a ſynod of heroes; and, as ſome would then ſay of us, could only be matched by a ſenate of old *Rome* in its age of higheſt glory. To this parliament I had the honour to be deputed, whither I went

with high-erected thoughts, and a heart panting for glory and the true ſervice of my country. The diſſolution, which ſo unhappily followed, ſerved only to increaſe this ardour. So that, on our next meeting in *November*, I went freely and warmly into the meaſures of thoſe, who were ſuppoſed to mean the beſt. I voted, I ſpoke, I impeached [*f*]. In a word, I gave a free ſcope to thoſe generous thoughts and purpoſes which had been collecting in me for ſo many years, and was in the foremoſt rank of thoſe, whoſe pulſe beat higheſt for liberty, and who were moſt active for the intereſt of the public.

DR. MORE.

THIS was indeed a triumph, the very memory of which warms you to this

[*f*] This alludes to the impeachment of Mr. *Juſtice* CRAWLEY, *July* 6, 1641, for his extrajudicial opinion in the affair of *Ship-money*. Mr. WALLER's ſpeech on this occaſion is extant amongſt his works.

moment.

moment. So bright a flame was not eaſily extinguiſhed.

MR. WALLER.

It continued for ſome time in all its vigour. High as my notions were of public liberty, they did not tranſport me with that zeal which prevailed on ſo many others, to act againſt the juſt prerogative of the crown, and the ancient conſtitution. I owe it to the converſation and influence of the excellent ſociety, before mentioned, that neither the ſpirit, the ſenſe, nor, what is more, the relationſhip and intimate acquaintance of Mr. Hampden [g], could ever biaſs me to his deeper deſigns, or any irreverence to the unhappy king's perſon. Many things concurred to preſerve me in this due mean. The violent tendencies of many councils on the parliament's ſide; many gracious and important compliances on the king's; the

[g] The famous Mr. Hampden was his uncle.

great

great examples of ſome who had moſt authority with good men; and laſtly, my own temper, which, in its higheſt fervours, always inclined to moderation; theſe and other circumſtances kept me from the exceſſes, on either hand, which ſo few were able to avoid in that ſcene of public confuſion.

DR. MORE.

THIS moderation carries with it all the marks of a real and confirmed virtue.

MR. WALLER.

I RATHER expected you would have conſidered it as another *ſacrifice to Inſincerity*. Such, I remember, was the language of many at that time. The enthuſiaſts on both ſides agreed to ſtigmatize this temper with the name of *Neutrality*. Yet this treatment did not prevent me, when the war broke out, from taking a courſe which, I eaſily foreſaw, would tend to increaſe ſuch ſuſpicions; for

for now, to open a fresh scene to you, I had assumed, if not new principles, yet new notions of the manner in which good policy required me to exert my old ones. The general virtue, or what had the appearance of it at least, had hitherto made plain-dealing an easy and convenient conduct. But things were now changed. The minds of all men were on fire: deep designs were laid, and no practice such as that might be proper to advance the execution of them. In this situation of affairs, what could simple honesty do, but defeat the purpose and endanger the safety of its master? I now, first, began to reflect that this was a virtue for other times: at least, that not to qualify it, in some sort, was, at such a juncture, not honesty, but imprudence: and when I had once fallen into this train of thinking, it is wonderful how many things occurred to me to justify and recommend it. The humour of acting always on one principle was, I said

to myself, like that of sailing with one wind: whereas the expert mariner wins his way by plying in all directions, as occasions serve, and making the best of all weathers. Then I considered with myself the bad policy, in such a conjuncture, of CATO and BRUTUS, and easily approved in my own mind the more pliant and conciliating method of CICERO. Those stoics, thought I, ruined themselves and their cause by a too obstinate adherence to their system. The liberal and more enlarged conduct of the academic, who took advantage of all winds that blew in that state of civil dissension, had a chance at least, for doing his country better service. Observation, as well as books, furnished me with these reflections. I perceived with what difficulty the Lord FALKLAND's rigid principles had suffered him to accept an office of the greatest consequence to the public safety [*b*]: and I understood to

[*b*] That of *Secretary of State*. The Lord CLARENDON tells us it was with the utmost difficulty he

what

what an extreme his ſcruples had carried him in the diſcharge of it [*f*]. This, concluded I, can never be the office of virtue in ſuch a world, and in ſuch a period. And then that of the poet, ſo ſkilled in the knowledge of life, occurred to me,

perſuaded him to accept it. "There were two conſiderations (ſays the hiſtorian) that made moſt impreſſion on him; the *one*, leſt the world ſhould believe that his own ambition had procured this promotion, and that he had therefore appeared ſignally in the houſe to oppoſe thoſe proceedings, that he might thereby render himſelf gracious to the court. The *other*, leſt the King ſhould expect ſuch a ſubmiſſion and reſignation of himſelf and his own reaſon and judgment to his commands, as he ſhould never give or pretend to give; for he was ſo ſevere an adorer of truth, that he would as eaſily have given himſelf leave to ſteal as to diſſemble," &c. B. iv.

[*f*] The noble hiſtorian, before cited, gives us two inſtances of Lord FALKLAND's ſcrupulosity. The *one* was, "That he could never bring himſelf to employ ſpies, or give any countenance or entertainment to them:" The other, "That he could never allow himſelf the liberty of opening letters, upon a ſuſpicion that they might contain matter of dangerous conſequence." B. viii.

— aut virtus nomen inane eſt,
Aut decus et pretium recte petit EXPERIENS vir;

that is, as I explained it, "The man of a ready and dextrous turn in affairs; one who knows how to take advantage of all circumſtances, and is not reſtrained, by his bigotry, from varying his conduct, as occaſions ſerve, and making, as it were, *experiments* in buſineſs."

DR. MORE.

You poets, I ſuppoſe, have an excluſive right to explain one another; or theſe words might ſeem to bear a more natural interpretation.

MR. WALLER.

You will underſtand from this account, which I have opened ſo particularly to you, on what reaſons I was induced to alter my plan, or rather to purſue it with thoſe arts of prudence and addreſs, which the turn of the times had now rendered neceſſary. The concluſion

ſion was, I reſolved to purſue ſteadily the king's, which at the ſame time was manifeſtly the nation's, intereſt, and yet to keep fair with the parliament, and the managers on that ſide; for this appeared the likelieſt way of doing him real ſervice. And yet ſome officious ſcruples, which forced themſelves upon me at firſt, had like to have fixed me in other meaſures. In the ſtream of thoſe, who choſe to deſert the houſes rather than ſhare in the violent counſels that prevailed in them, the general diſguſt had, alſo, carried me to withdraw myſelf. But this ſtart of zeal was ſoon over. I preſently ſaw, and found means to ſatisfy the king, that it would be more for his ſervice that I ſhould return to the parliament. I therefore reſumed my ſeat and took leave (to ſay the truth, it was not denied me by the houſe, who had their own ends to ſerve by this indulgence [*k*]) to

[*k*] To this purpoſe my Lord CLARENDON. "He [Mr. W.] ſpoke, upon all occaſions, with great

reaſon and debate in all points with great freedom. At the ſame time my affections to the common intereſt were not ſuſpected; for, having no connexion with the court, nobody thought of charging me with private views; and not forgetting, beſides, to cultivate a good underſtanding with the perſons of chief credit in the houſe, the plainneſs I uſed could only be taken for what it was, an honeſt and parliamentary liberty. This ſituation was, for a time, very favourable to me: for the king's friends regarded me as the champion of their cauſe; whilſt the prudence of my carriage towards the leading members ſe-

ſharpneſs and freedom: which (now there were ſo few that uſed it, and there was no danger of being over-voted) was not reſtrained; and therefore uſed as an argument againſt thoſe, who were gone upon pretence, that they were not ſuffered to declare their opinion freely in the houſe; which could not be believed, when all men knew what liberty Mr. WALLER took, and ſpoke every day with impunity, againſt the ſenſe and proceedings of the houſe." B. vii.

cured

cured me, in a good degree, from their jealouſy.

DR. MORE.

Your policy, I obſerve, had now taken a more refined turn. The juncture of affairs might poſſibly juſtify this addreſs: but the ground you ſtood upon was ſlippery; and I own myſelf alarmed at what may be the conſequence of this ſollicitous purſuit of popularity.

MR. WALLER.

No exception, I think, can be fairly taken at the methods, by which I purſued it. However, this *popularity* it was, as you rightly divine, which drew upon me all the miſchiefs that followed. For the application of all men, diſpoſed to the king's ſervice, was now made to me. I had an opportunity, by this means, of knowing the characters and views of particular perſons, and of getting an inſight into the true ſtate of the king's

affairs. And theſe advantages, in the end, drove me on the project, which, on the diſcovery, came to be called my *Plot*: an event, which, with all its particulars, you underſtand too well to need any information from me about it.

DR. MORE.

THE ſtory, as it was noiſed abroad, I am no ſtranger to: but this being one of thoſe occaſions, as they ſay, in which both your policy and virtue were put to the ſharpeſt trial, it would be much to the purpoſe, you have in view by this recital, to favour me with your own account of it.

MR. WALLER.

To lead you through all particulars, would not ſuit with the brevity, you require of me. But ſomething I will ſay to obviate the miſconceptions, you may poſſibly have entertained of this buſineſs [*l*]. For the plot itſelf, the utmoſt

[*l*] See Lord CLARENDON's Hiſtory.

of

of my deſign was only to form ſuch a combination among the honeſt and well-affected of all ſorts, as might have weight enough to incline the houſes to a peace, and prevent the miſeries, that were too certainly to be apprehended from a civil war. It was never in my thoughts to ſurprize the parliament or city by force, or engage the army in the ſupport and execution of my purpoſe. But my deſign in this affair, though the fury of my enemies and the fatal jealouſy of the time would not ſuffer it to be rightly underſtood, is not that which my friends reſented, and which moſt men were diſpoſed to blame in me. It was my behaviour afterwards, and the obliquity of ſome means, which I found expedient to my own ſafety, that expoſed me to ſo rude a ſtorm of cenſure. It continues, I know, to beat upon me even at this diſtance. But the injuſtice hath ariſen from the force of vulgar prejudices, and from the want of entering into thoſe enlarged

enlarged principles, on which it was neceſſary for me to proceed in that juncture.

DR. MORE.

YET the ill ſucceſs of this plot itſelf might have ſhewn you, what the deſign of acting on theſe *enlarged principles* was likely to come to. It was an unlucky experiment, this, you had made in the *new* arts of living; and ſhould have been a warning to you, not to proceed in a path which, at the very entrance of it, had involved you in ſuch difficulties.

MR. WALLER.

No, it was not the new path, you object to me, but the good old road of Sincerity, which miſled me into thoſe brambles. I, in the ſimplicity of my heart, thought it my duty to adhere to the injured king's cauſe, and believed my continuance in parliament the faireſt, as well as the likelieſt method, that could be taken to ſupport it. Had I

temporized ſo far as either to deſert my prince, and ſtrike in with the parliament, or, on the other hand, had left the houſe and gone with the ſeceders to *Oxford*, either way I had been ſecure. But reſolving, as I did, to hold my principles, and follow my judgment, I fell into thoſe unhappy circumſtances, from which all the dexterity, I afterwards aſſumed, was little enough to deliver me.

DR. MORE.

But if your intentions were ſo pure, and the methods, by which you reſolved to proſecute them, ſo blameleſs, how happened it that any plot could be worked up of ſo much danger to your life and perſon?

MR. WALLER.

This was the very thing I was going to explain to you. My intentions towards the parliament were fair and honourable: as I retained my ſeat there, I could not allow myſelf in the uſe of any

any but parliamentary methods to promote the cauſe I had undertaken. And this, as I ſaid, was the whole purpoſe of the *combination*, which was made the pretence to ruin me: for my unhappy project of a reconciliation was ſo inextricably confounded with another of more dangerous tendency, the *commiſſion of array*, ſent at that time from *Oxford*, that nothing, I preſently ſaw, could poſſibly diſentangle ſo perplexed a buſineſs, or defeat the malice of my enemies, if I attempted, in the more direct way, to ſtand on my defence. Preſumptions, if not proofs, they had in abundance: the conſternation of all men was great; their rage, unrelenting; and the general enthuſiaſm of the time, outrageous. Conſider all this, and ſee what chance there was for eſcaping their injuſtice, if I had reſtrained myſelf to the ſole uſe of thoſe means, which you men of the cloiſter magnify ſo much, under I know not what names of *Sincerity* and *Honour*.

And,

And, indeed, this late experience, of what was to be expected from the way of plain-dealing, had determined me, henceforth, to take a different route; and, ſince I had drawn theſe miſchiefs on myſelf by *Sincerity*, to try what a little management could do towards bringing me out of them.

DR. MORE.

It was not, I perceive, without cauſe, that the ſubtlety you had begun to have recourſe to, filled me with apprehenſions. Sincerity and Honour, Mr. Waller, are plain things, and hold no acquaintance with this ingenious caſuiſtry.

MR. WALLER.

What, not in ſuch a ſituation? It ſhould ſeem, then, as if you moraliſts conceived a man owed nothing to himſelf: that *ſelf-preſervation* was not what God and Nature have made it, the firſt and moſt binding of all laws: that a man's

man's family, not to say his country, have no interest in the life of an innocent and deserving citizen: and, in one word, that *prudence* is but an empty name, though you give it a place among your *cardinal virtues*. All this must be concluded before you reject, as unlawful, the means, I was forced upon, at this season, for my defence: means, I presume to say, so sagely contrived, and, as my very enemies will own, executed so happily, that I cannot to this day reflect on my conduct in that affair, without satisfaction.

DR. MORE.

YET it had some consequences which a man of your generosity would a little startle at.—

MR. WALLER.

I UNDERSTAND you: my friends—But I shall answer that objection in its place.

LET

Let me at preſent go on with the particulars of my defence. The occaſion, as you ſee, was diſtreſsful to the laſt degree. To deny or defend myſelf from the charge, was a thing impoſſible. What remained then but to confeſs it, and in ſo frank and ample a manner, as might beſpeak the pity or engage the protection of my accuſers. I reſolved to ſay nothing but the *truth*; and, if ever the *whole* truth may be ſpoken, it is, when ſo alarming an occaſion calls for it. Beſides, what had others, who might be affected by the diſcovery, to complain of? I diſclaimed no part of the guilt myſelf: nor could any confeſſion be made, that did not firſt and chiefly affect me. And if I, who was principal in the contrivance, had the beſt chance for eſcaping by ſuch confeſſion, what had they, who were only accomplices, to apprehend from it? Add to this, that the number and credit of the perſons, who were charged with having a ſhare

in

in the deſign, were, of all others, the likelieſt conſiderations to prevail with the houſes to drop the further proſecution of it.

WELL, the diſcovery had great effects. But there was no ſtopping here. Penitence, as well as confeſſion, is expected from a ſinner. I had to do with hypocrites of the worſt ſort. What fairer weapons then, than hypocriſy and diſſimulation? I counterfeited the ſtrongeſt remorſe, and with a life and ſpirit that diſpoſed all men to believe, and moſt, to pity me. My trial was put off in very compaſſion to my diſorder; which, in appearance, was ſo great, that ſome ſuſpected my underſtanding had been affected by it. In this contrivance I had two views; to gain time for my defence, and to keep it off till the fury of my proſecutors was abated. In this interval, indeed, ſome of my accomplices ſuffered. But how was it poſſible for me to apprehend

hend that, when, if any, I myſelf might expect to have fallen the firſt victim of their reſentment?

DR. MORE.

If this apology ſatisfy yourſelf, I need not interrupt your ſtory with any exceptions.

MR. WALLER.

It was, in truth, the only thing which afflicted me in the courſe of this whole buſineſs. But time and reflection have reconciled me to what was, in ſome ſenſe, occaſioned, but certainly not intended, by me. And it would be a ſtrange morality that ſhould charge a man with the undeſigned conſequences of his own actions.

DR. MORE.

And were all the ſymptoms of a diſturbed mind, you made a ſhew of, then entirely counterfeit?

MR. WALLER.

As certainly as thoſe of the Roman BRUTUS, who, to tell you the truth, was my example on that occaſion. It was the buſineſs of both of us to elude the malice of our enemies, and reſerve ourſelves for the future ſervice of our reſpective countries.

BUT all I have told you was only a prelude to a further, and ſtill more neceſſary, act of diſſimulation. Had the houſe been left to itſelf, it might poſſibly have abſolved me, on the merits of ſo large a confeſſion, and ſo lively a repentance. But I had to do with another claſs of men, with holy inquiſitors of ſordid minds, and ſour ſpirits; prieſtly reformers, whoſe ſenſe was noiſe, and religion fanaticiſm, and that too fermented with the leaven of earthly avarice and ambition. Theſe had great influence both within doors and without, and would regard

regard what had hitherto paſſed as nothing, if I went not much further. To theſe, having begun in ſo good a train, I was now to addreſs myſelf. I had ſtudied their humours, and underſtood to a tittle the arts, that were moſt proper to gain them.

THE firſt ſtep to the countenance and good liking of theſe reſtorers of primitive parity was, I well knew, the moſt implicit ſubjection both of will and underſtanding. I magnified their gifts, I revered their ſanctity. I debaſed myſelf with all imaginable humility: I extolled them with the groſſeſt flattery.

HAVING thus ſucceeded to my wiſh in drawing the principal of theſe ſaints around me, I advanced further: I ſought their inſtruction, ſollicited their advice, and importuned their ghoſtly conſolation. This brought me into high favour: they regarded me as one, who wiſhed and

deſerved to be enlightened: they ſtrove which ſhould impart moſt of their lights and revelations to me. I beſought them to expound, and pray, and preach before me: nay I even preached, and prayed, and expounded before them. I out-canted the beſt-gifted of them; and out-railed the bittereſt of all their decriers of an anti-chriſtian prelacy. In ſhort, it would have moved your laughter or your indignation to obſerve, how ſubmiſſively I demeaned myſelf to theſe ſpiritual fathers; how I hung on their words, echoed their coarſe ſayings, and mimicked their beggarly tones and grimaces.

To compleat the farce, I intreated their acceptance of ſuch returns for their godly inſtructions, as fortune had enabled me to make them. I prevailed with them to give leave that ſo unworthy a perſon might be the inſtrument of conveying earthly accommodations to

theſe

theſe diſpenſers of heavenly treaſures; and it ſurpaſſes all belief, with what an avidity they devoured them! It is true, this laſt was a ſerious conſideration: in all other reſpects, the whole was a perfect comedy; and of ſo ridiculous a caſt, that, though my ſituation gave me power of face to carry it off gravely then, I have never reflected on it ſince without laughter.

DR. MORE.

TRULY, as you deſcribe it, it was no ſerious ſcene. But what I admire moſt is the dexterity of your genius, and the prodigious progreſs, you had now made in your favourite arts of *accommodation*.

MR. WALLER.

NECESSITY is the beſt maſter. Beſides, can you blame me for taking more than common pains to outdo theſe miſcreants in their own way; I might ſay, to excel in an art which ſurpaſſes, or at leaſt comprizes in it, the eſſence of all

true wiſdom? The precept of your admired ANTONINUS, as you reminded me to day, is SIMPLIFY YOURSELF [*m*]. That, I think, was the quaint expreſſion. It had ſhewn his reach and maſtery in the trade he profeſſed, much more, if, inſtead of it, he had preached up, ACCOMMODATE YOURSELF; the grand ſecret, as long experience has taught me, *bene beateque vivendi.*

ALL matters thus prepared, there was now no hazard in playing my laſt game. I requeſted and obtained leave to make my defence before the parliament. I had acquired a knack in ſpeaking; and had drawn on myſelf more credit, than fine words deſerve, by a ſcenical and ſpecious eloquence. If ever I acquitted myſelf to my wiſh, it was on this occaſion. I ſoothed, I flattered, I alarmed: every

[*m*] Ἁπλωσον σεαυτόν. lib. iv. § 26. which Dr. MORE, in l. ii. c. 3. of his ENCHIRIDION ETHICUM, tranſlates, *ſimplifica teipſum*,

topic

topic of art which my youth had learned, every ſubject of addreſs which experience had ſuggeſted, every trick and artifice of popular adulation, was exhauſted. All men were prepared by the practices of my ſaintly emiſſaries to hear me with favour; and, which is the firſt and laſt advantage of a ſpeaker, to believe me ſeriouſly and conſcientiouſly affected.

In the end I triumphed; and for a moderate fine obtained leave to ſhelter myſelf from the following ſtorm, which almoſt deſolated this unhappy country, by retiring into an exile at that time more deſirable, than any employment of thoſe I left behind me.

DR. MORE.

You retired, I think, to *France*, whither, no doubt, you carried with you all thoſe generous thoughts and conſolatory reflexions, which refreſh the ſpirit of a

good man under a conſciouſneſs of ſuffering virtue.

MR. WALLER.

WHY not, if *prudence* be a virtue? for what, but certain prudential regards (which in common language and common ſenſe are quite another thing from vicious compliances) have hitherto, as you have ſeen, appeared in my conduct? But be they what they will, they had a very natural effect, and one which will always attend on ſo reaſonable a way of proceeding. For, ſince you preſs me ſo much, I ſhall take leave to ſuggeſt an obſervation to you, more obvious as well as more candid than any you ſeem inclined to make on the circumſtances of this long relation. It is "that the *pretended* penitence for my paſt life, and the readineſs I ſhewed to acquieſce in the *falſe* accounts which the parliament gave of my plot, ſaved my life, and procured my liberty; whilſt the *real and*

true diſcoveries I made, to gain credit to *both*, hurt my reputation." But ſuch a reflexion might have ſhocked your ſyſtem too much. For it ſhews that all the benefit, I drew to myſelf in this affair, aroſe from thoſe *prudential maxims* you condemn; and that all the injury, I ſuffered, was owing to the *ſincerity* I ſtill mixed with them.

DR. MORE.

SERIOUSLY, Sir, ——

MR. WALLER.

I CAN gueſs what you would ſay: but you promiſed to hear me out, without interruption.

WHAT remains I ſhall diſpatch in few words, having ſo fully vindicated the moſt obnoxious part of my life, and opened the general principles, I acted upon, ſo clearly.

I WENT, as you ſaid, to *France*; where, inſtead of the churliſh humour of a male-

a male-content, or the unmanly dejection of a diſgraced exile, I appeared with an eaſe and gaiety of mind, which made me welcome to the greateſt men of that country. The ruling principle of my philoſophy was, to make the beſt of every ſituation. And, as my fortune enabled me to do it, I lived with hoſpitality, and even ſplendor; and indulged myſelf in all the delights of an enlarged and elegant converſation.

Such were my amuſements for ſome years; during which time, however, I preſerved the notions of loyalty, which had occaſioned my diſgrace, and waited ſome happier turn of affairs, that might reſtore me with honour to my country. But when all hopes of this ſort were at an end, and the government, after the various revolutions which are well known, ſeemed fixed and eſtabliſhed in the perſon of one man, it was not allegiance, but obſtinacy, to hold out any longer.

I eaſily

I eaſily ſucceeded in my application to be recalled, and was even admitted to a ſhare in the confidence of the PROTECTOR. This great man was not without a ſenſibility of true glory; and, for that reaſon, was even ambitious of the honour, which wit and genius are ever ready to confer on illuſtrious greatneſs. Every muſe of that time diſtinguiſhed, and was diſtinguiſhed by, him. Mine had improved her voice and accent in a foreign country: and what nobler occaſion to try her happieſt ſtrain than this, of immortalizing a Hero?

"Illuſtrious acts high raptures do infuſe,
"And ev'ry conqueror creates a muſe;"

as I then ſaid in a panegyric, which my gratitude prompted me to preſent to him [*n*].

DR. MORE.

THIS panegyric, preſented in verſe, could hardly, I ſuppoſe, be ſuſpected of flattery!

[*n*] In the year 1654.

MR.

MR. WALLER.

I EXPECTED this; but the occaſion, as I ſaid, might have ſuggeſted a fairer interpretation. And why impute as a fault to me, what the reverend SPRAT, as well as DRYDEN, did not diſdain to countenance by their examples? Beſides, as an argument of the unſullied purity of my intention, you might remember, methinks, that I aſked no recompence, and accepted none, for the willing honours my muſe paid him.

DR. MORE.

IT muſt be a ſordid muſe indeed, that ſubmits to a venal proſtitution. And, to do your profeſſion juſtice, it is not ſo much avarice, or even ambition, as a certain gentler paſſion, the vanity, ſhall I call it, of being well with the *great*, that is fatal to you poets.

MR.

MR. WALLER.

I CAN allow for the ſatyr of this reproof, in a man of antient and bookiſh manners. But, to ſhew my diſintereſtedneſs ſtill more, you may recollect, if you pleaſe, that I embalmed his memory, when neither his favour nor his ſmile were to be apprehended.

DR. MORE.

IN the ſhort reign of his ſon.—But what then? you made amends for all, by the congratulation on the happy return of his preſent majeſty. You know who it was that ſomebody complimented in theſe lines:

"He beſt can turn, enforce and ſoften things,
"To praiſe great conquerors and flatter kings."

MR. WALLER.

WAS it for me to ſtem the torrent of a nation's joys by a froward and unſeaſonable ſilence? Didnot HORACE, who fought

fought at *Philippi*, do as much for Augustus? And ſhould I, who had ſuffered for his cauſe, not embrace the goodneſs, and ſalute the returning fortunes, of ſo gracious, ſo accompliſhed a maſter? His majeſty himſelf, as I truly ſay of him, in the poem you object to me,

"with wiſdom fraught,
"Not ſuch as books, but ſuch as practice, taught,"

did me the juſtice to underſtand my addreſs after another manner. He, who had ſo often been forced by the neceſſities of his affairs to make compliances with the time, never reſented it from me, a private man and a poet, that I had made ſome ſacrifices of a like nature. All this might convince you of the great truth I meant to inculcate by this long recital, that not a ſullen and inflexible *Sincerity*, but a fair and ſeaſonable *accommodation of one's ſelf*, to the various exigencies of the times, is the golden virtue that ought to predominate in a man of

of life and buſineſs. All the reſt, believe me, is the very cant of philoſophy and unexperienced wiſdom.

DR. MORE.

WISDOM—and muſt the ſanctity of that name—

MR. WALLER.

HEAR me, Sir—no exclamations againſt the evidence of plain fact. I have a right to expect another conduct from him, who is grown grey in the ſtudies of moral ſcience.

DR. MORE.

You learned another leſſon in the ſchool of FAULKLAND, HYDE, and CHILLINGWORTH.

MR. WALLER.

YES, one I was obliged to unlearn. But, ſince you remind me of that ſchool, what was the effect of adhering pertinaciouſly to its falſe maxims? To what purpoſe

purpoſe were the lives of *two* of them prodigally thrown away; and the honour, the wiſdom, the talents of the *other*, ſtill left to languiſh in baniſhment [*o*] and obſcurity?

DR. MORE.

O! PROPHANE not the glories of immortal, though ſucceſsleſs virtue, with ſuch reproaches.—Thoſe adored names ſhall preach honour to future ages, and enthrone the majeſty of virtue in the hearts of men, when wit and parts, and eloquence, and poetry, have not a leaf of all their withered bays to recommend them.

MR. WALLER.

RAPTURES and chimæras!—Rather judge of the ſentiments of future ages, from the preſent. Where is the man, I ſpeak it without boaſting, that enjoys a fairer fame; who is better received in all places; who is more liſtened to in

[*o*] Lord CLARENDON died in 1674.

all

all companies; who reaps the fruits of a reaſonable and practicable virtue in every return of honour, more unqueſtionably, than he whoſe life and principles your outrageous virtue leads you to undervalue ſo unworthily? And take it from me as an oracle, which long age and experience enable me to deliver with all aſſurance, "Whoever, in ſucceeding times, ſhall form himſelf on the plan here given, ſhall meet with the ſafety, credit, applauſe, and, if he chuſes, honour and fortune in the world, which may be promiſed indeed, but never will be obtained, by any other method."

DR. MORE.

You have ſpoken. But hear me now, I conjure you, whilſt a poor deſpiſed philoſopher—

MR. WALLER.

O! I HAVE marked the emotion this diſcourſe of mine hath awakened in you.

I have ſeen your impatience: I have watched your eyes, when they ſparkled defiance and contradiction to my argument. But your warmth makes you forget yourſelf. I gave a patient hearing to all your eloquence could ſuggeſt in this cauſe. I even favoured your zeal, and helped to blow up your enthuſiaſm. The reſt fell to my turn; and beſides, the evening, as you ſee, ſhuts in upon us. Let us eſcape, at leaſt, from its dews, which, in this decline of the year, they ſay, are not the moſt wholeſome, into a warm apartment within doors; and then I ſhall not be averſe, eſpecially when you have taken a few minutes to recollect yourſelf, to debate with you what further remains upon this argument [*p*].

[*p*] The character of Mr. WALLER is given at large in the *Life of Lord Clarendon*, P. I. p. 25.— As for Dr. MORE, Biſhop BURNET tell us, in one word, "That he was an open-hearted and ſincere "Chriſtian philoſopher." *Hiſt. of his own Time*, vol. i. p. 273, 12mo, *Edinb.* 1753.

DIA-

DIALOGUE II.

On RETIREMENT.

MR. ABRAHAM COWLEY—
THE REV. MR. SPRAT.

To the Earl of ST. ALBANS [a].

MY LORD,

THE duty I owe your LORDSHIP, as well as my friendſhip for Mr. COWLEY, determined me to loſe no time in executing the commiſſion you was

[a] This Dialogue is founded on a ſhort paſſage in Mr. SPRAT's Life of Mr. COWLEY, in which he obſerves, "That in his long dependance on my Lord ST. ALBANS, there never happened any manner of difference between them; except a little at LAST, becauſe he would leave his ſervice."

pleaſed to charge me with by Mr. D****. I went early the next morning to *Barn-Elms* [*b*]; intending to paſs the whole day with him, and to try if what I might be able to ſuggeſt on the occaſion, together with the weight of your lordſhip's advice, could not divert him from his ſtrange project of *Retirement*. Your lordſhip, no doubt, as all his other friends, had obſerved his bias that way to be very ſtrong; but who, that knew his great ſenſe, could have thought of its carrying him to ſo extravagant a reſolution? For my own part, I ſuſpected it ſo little, that, though he would often talk of retiring, and eſpecially ſince your lordſhip's favour to him [*c*], I conſidered it only as the uſual language of poets, which they take up one after another,

[*b*] A ſmall village on the *Thames*, which was Mr. COWLEY's firſt retreat, before he removed to *Chertſea*.

[*c*] Meaning an eſtate he had obtained by means of this lord. This particular is ſeveral times referred to in the courſe of the Dialogue.

and

and love to indulge in, as what they ſuppoſe becomes their family and profeſſion. It could never come into my thoughts, that one, who knew the world ſo well as Mr. Cowley, and had lived ſo long in it, who had ſo fair hopes and ſo noble a patron, could ſeriouſly think of quitting the ſcene at his years, and all for ſo fantaſtic a purpoſe as that of growing old in the corner of a country village.

These, my lord, were my ſentiments, when your friendly meſſage alarmed me with the apprehenſion of there being more in the matter, than I had ſuſpected. Yet ſtill I conſidered it only as a haſty thought, which a fit of the ſpleen, or of the muſe it may be, had raiſed; and which the free remonſtrance of a friend would eaſily diſperſe, or prevent at leaſt from coming to any fixed and ſettled reſolution. But how ſhall I expreſs to your lordſhip the ſurprize I was in, to find that this reſolution was not only

taken, but rooted ſo deeply in him, that no arguments, nor even your lordſhip's authority, could ſhake it? I have ever admired Mr. COWLEY, as a man of the happieſt temper and trueſt judgement; but, to ſay the leaſt, there was ſomething ſo particular, I had almoſt ſaid perverſe, in what he had to alledge for himſelf on this occaſion, that I cannot think I acquit myſelf to your lordſhip, without laying before you the whole of this extraordinary converſation; and, as far as my recollection will ſerve, in the very words in which it paſſed betwixt us.

I WENT, as I told your lordſhip, pretty early to *Barn-Elms*; but my friend had gotten the ſtart of me by ſome hours. He was buſying himſelf with ſome improvements of his garden, and the fields that lie about his houſe. The whole circuit of his domain was not ſo large, but that I preſently came up with him. "My dear friend, ſaid he, embracing me, but with

with a look of ſome reſerve and diſguſt, and is it you then I have the happineſs to ſee, at length, in my new ſettlement? Though I fled hither from the reſt of the world, I had no deſign to get out of the reach of my friends. And, to be plain with you, I took it a little amiſs from one, whoſe entire affection I had reckoned upon, that he ſhould leave me to myſelf for theſe two whole months, without diſcovering an inclination, either from friendſhip or curioſity, to know how this retirement agreed with me. What could induce my beſt friend to uſe me ſo unkindly?"

SURELY, ſaid I, you forget the ſuddeneſs of your flight, and the ſecreſy with which the reſolution was taken. We ſuppoſed you gone only for a few days, to ſee to the management of your affairs: and could not dream of your *ruſticating* thus long, at a time when the town and court are ſo buſy; when the occaſions of your friends and your own

intereſts ſeemed to require your ſpeedy return to us. However, continued I, it doth not diſpleaſe me to find you ſo diſſatisfied with this ſolitude. It looks as if the ſhort experience, you have had of this recluſe life, did not recommend it to you in the manner, you expected. Retirement is a fine thing in imagination, and is apt to poſſeſs you poets with ſtrange viſions. But the charm is rarely laſting; and a ſhort trial, I find, hath ſerved to correct theſe fancies. You feel yourſelf born for ſociety and the world, and, by your kind complaints of your friend, confeſs how unnatural it is to deny yourſelf the proper delights of a man, the delights of converſation.

Not ſo faſt, interrupted he, if you pleaſe, in your concluſions about the nature of retirement. I never meant to give up my right in the affections of thoſe few, I call my friends. But what has this to do with the general purpoſe of retreating

retreating from the anxieties of buſineſs, the intrigues of policy, or the impertinencies of converſation? I have lived but too long in a ceaſeleſs round of theſe follies. The beſt part of my time hath been ſpent *ſub dio*. I have ſerved in all weathers, and in all climates, but chiefly in the torrid zone of politics, where the paſſions of all men are on fire, and where ſuch as have lived the longeſt, and are thought the happieſt, are ſcarcely able to reconcile themſelves to the ſultry air of the place. But this warfare is now happily at an end. I have languiſhed theſe many years for the ſhade. Thanks to my Lord ST. ALBANS, and another noble lord you know of, I have now gained it. And it is not a ſmall matter, I aſſure you, ſhall force me out of this ſhelter.

NOTHING is eaſier, ſaid I, than for you men of wit to throw a ridicule upon any thing. It is but applying a quaint figure, or a well-turned ſentence, and the

the buſineſs is done. But indeed, my beſt friend, it gives me pain to find you not ſo much diverting as deceiving yourſelf with this unſeaſonable ingenuity. So long as theſe ſallies of fancy were employed only to enliven converſation, or furniſh matter for an ode or an epigram, all was very well. But now that you ſeem diſpoſed to *act* upon them, you muſt excuſe me if I take the matter a little more ſeriouſly. To deal plainly with you, I come to tell you my whole mind on this ſubject: and, to give what I have to ſay the greater conſequence with you, I muſt not conceal from you, that I come commiſſioned by the excellent lord you honour ſo much, and have juſt now mentioned, to expoſtulate in the freeſt manner with you upon it.

We had continued walking all this time, and were now aſcending a ſort of natural terras. It led to a ſmall thicket, in the entrance of which was a ſeat that commanded

commanded a pleaſant view of the country, and the river. Taking me up to it, "Well, ſaid he, my good friend, ſince your purpoſe in coming hither is ſo kind, and my Lord ST. ALBANS himſelf doth me the honour to think my private concerns deſerving his particular notice, it becomes me to receive your meſſage with reſpect, and to debate the matter, ſince you preſs it ſo home upon me, with all poſſible calmneſs. But let us, if you pleaſe, ſit down here. You will find it the moſt agreeable ſpot I have to treat you with; and the ſhade we have about us will not, I ſuppoſe, at this hour, be unwelcome."

AND now, turning himſelf to me, "Let me hear from you, what there is in my retreat to this place, which a wiſe man can have reaſon to cenſure, or which may deſerve the diſallowance of a friend. I know you come prepared with every argument which men of the world have at

at any time employed againſt retirement; and I know your ability to give to each its full force. But look upon this ſcene before you, and tell me what inducements I can poſſibly have to quit it for any thing you can promiſe me in exchange? Is there in that vaſt labyrinth, you call the world, where ſo many thouſands loſe themſelves in endleſs wandrings and perplexities, any corner where the mind can recollect itſelf ſo perfectly, where it can attend to its own buſineſs, and purſue its proper intereſts ſo conveniently, as in this quiet and ſequeſtered ſpot? Here the paſſions ſubſide; or, if they continue to agitate, do not however tranſport the mind with thoſe feveriſh and vexatious fervours, which diſtract us in public life. This is the ſeat of virtue and of reaſon; here I can faſhion my life by the precepts of duty and conſcience; and here I have leiſure to make acquaintance, that acquaintance

quaintance which elſewhere is ſo rarely made, with the ways and works of God.

THINK again, my friend. Doth not the genius of the place ſeize you? Do you not perceive a certain ſerenity ſteal in upon you? Doth not the aſpect of things around you, the very ſtillneſs of this retreat, infuſe a content and ſatisfaction, which the world knows nothing of? Tell me, in a word, is there not ſomething like enchantment about us? Do you not find your deſires more compoſed, your purpoſes more pure, your thoughts more elevated, and more active, ſince your entrance into this ſcene?"

HE was proceeding in this ſtrain, with an air of perfect enthuſiaſm, when I broke in upon him with aſking, "Whether this was what he called *debating the matter calmly with me.*" Surely, ſaid I, this is poetry, or ſomething ſtill more extravagant. You cannot think I come

prepared to encounter you in this way. I own myſelf no match for you at theſe weapons: which indeed are too fine for my handling, and very unſuitable to my purpoſe if they were not. The point is not which of us can ſay the handſomeſt things, but the trueſt, on either ſide of the queſtion. It is, as you ſaid, plain argument, and not rhetorical flouriſhes, much leſs poetical raptures, that muſt decide the matter in debate. Not but a great deal might be ſaid on my ſide, and, it may be, with more colour of truth, had I the command of an eloquence proper to ſet it off.

I MIGHT aſk, in my turn, "Where is the mighty charm that draws you to this inglorious ſolitude, from the duties of buſineſs and converſation, from the proper end and employment of man? How comes it to paſs, that this ſtillneſs of a country landſcape, this uninſtructing, though agreeable enough, ſcene of fields and

and waters, ſhould have greater beauty in your eye, than *flouriſhing peopled towns*, the ſcenes of induſtry and art, of public wealth and happineſs? Is not the *ſublime countenance* of man, ſo one of your acquaintance terms it, a more delightful object than any of theſe humble beauties that lie before us? And are not the human virtues, with all their train of lovely and beneficial effects in ſociety, better worth contemplating, than the products of inanimate nature in the field or wood? Where ſhould we ſeek for REASON, but in the minds of men tried and poliſhed in the ſchool of civil converſation? And where hath VIRTUE ſo much as a being out of the offices of ſocial life? Look well into yourſelf, I might ſay: hath not indeed the proper genius of ſolitude affected you? Doth not I know not what of chagrin and diſcontent hang about you? Is there not a gloom upon your mind, which darkens your views of human nature, and damps

thoſe

thoſe chearful thoughts and ſprightly purpoſes, which friendſhip and ſociety inſpire?"

You ſee, Sir, were I but diſpoſed, and as able as you are, to purſue this way of fancy and declamation, I might conjure up as many frightful forms in theſe retired walks, as you have delightful ones. And the enchantment in good hands would, I am perſuaded, have more the appearance of reality. But this is not the way in which I take upon myſelf to contend with you. I would hear, if you pleaſe, what reaſons, that deſerve to be ſo called, could determine you to ſo ſtrange, and, forgive me if at preſent I am forced to think it, ſo unreaſonable a project, as that of devoting your health and years to this monaſtic retirement. I would lay before you the arguments, which, I preſume, ſhould move you to quit a haſty, perhaps an unweighed, reſolution: ſo improper in itſelf, ſo alarming

to

to all your friends, ſo injurious to your own intereſt, and, permit me to ſay, to the public. I would enforce all this with the mild perſuaſions of a friend; and with the wiſdom, the authority of a great perſon, to whoſe opinion you owe a deference, and who deſerves it too from the entire love and affection he bears you."

My deareſt friend, replied he, with an earneſtneſs that awed, and a goodneſs that melted me, I am not to learn the affection which either you or my noble friend bear me. I have had too many proofs of it from both, to ſuffer me to doubt it. But why will you not allow me to judge of what is proper to conſtitute my own happineſs? And why muſt I be denied the privilege of chooſing for myſelf, in a matter where the different taſte or humour of others makes them ſo unfit to preſcribe to me? Yet I ſubmit to theſe unequal terms; and if I cannot

juſtify the choice I have made, even in the way of ſerious reaſon and argument, I promiſe to yield myſelf to your advice and authority. You have taken me perhaps a little unprepared and unfurniſhed for this conflict. I have not marſhalled my forces in form, as you ſeem to have done; and it may be difficult, on the ſudden, to methodize my thoughts in the manner you may poſſibly expect from me. But come, ſaid he, I will do my beſt in this emergency. You will excuſe the rapture which hurried me, at ſetting out, beyond the bounds which your ſeverer temper requires. The ſubject always fires me; and I find it difficult, in entering on this argument, to reſtrain thoſe triumphant ſallies, which had better have been reſerved for the cloſe of it.

HERE he pauſed a little; and recollecting himſelf, "But firſt, reſumed he, you will take notice, that I am not at all concerned in the general queſtion, ſo

much, and, I think, ſo vainly agitated, "*whether a life of retirement be preferable to one of action?*" I am not, I aſſure you, for unpeopling our cities, and ſending their induſtrious and uſeful inhabitants into woods and cloiſters. I acknowledge and admire the improvements of arts, the conveniencies of ſociety, the policies of government [*d*]. I have no thought ſo mad or ſo ſilly, as that of wiſhing to ſee the tribes of mankind diſbanded, their intereſts and connexions diſſolved, and themſelves turned looſe into a ſingle and ſolitary exiſtence. I would not even wiſh to ſee our courts deſerted of their homagers, though I cannot but

[*d*] The writer of the Dialogue has thought fit to ſoften the miſanthropy of Mr. COWLEY in this inſtance. In one of his Eſſays he talks ſtrangely. "It is the great boaſt, ſays he, of eloquence and philoſophy, that they firſt congregated men diſperſed, united them into cities, and built up the houſes and the walls of cities. I wiſh they could unravel all they had woven, that we might have our woods and our innocence again, inſtead *of our caſtles and our policies.*"

be of opinion, that an airing now and then at their country-houſes, and that not with the view of diverting, but recollecting themſelves, would prove as uſeful to their ſenſe and virtue, as to their eſtates. But all this, as I ſaid, is ſo far from coming into the ſcheme of my ſerious wiſhes, that it does not ſo much as enter into my thoughts. Let wealth and power, and pleaſure, be as eagerly ſought after, as they ever will be: let thouſands or millions aſſemble in vaſt towns, for the ſake of purſuing their ſeveral ends, as it may chance, of profit, vanity, or amuſement. All this is nothing to me, who pretend not to determine for other men, but to vindicate my own choice of this retirement.

As much as I have been involved in the engagements of buſineſs, I have not lived thus long without looking frequently, and ſometimes attentively, into myſelf. I maintain, then, that to a perſon ſo moulded

moulded as I am; of the *temper and turn of mind*, which Nature hath given me; of *the ſort of talents*, with which education or genius hath furniſhed me; and laſtly, of the *circumſtances*, in which fortune hath placed me; I ſay, to a perſon ſo charactered and ſo ſituated, RETIREMENT is not only his choice, but his duty; is not only what his inclination leads him to, but his judgment. And upon theſe grounds, if you will, I venture to undertake my own apology to you.

YOUR propoſal, ſaid I, is fair, and I can have no objection to cloſe with you upon theſe terms; only you muſt take care, my friend, that you do not miſtake or miſrepreſent your own talents or character; a miſcarriage, which, allow me to ſay, is not very rare from the partialities which an indulged humour, too eaſily taken for nature, is apt to create in us.

OR what, replied he, if this humour, as you call it, be ſo rooted as to become a *ſecond* nature? Can it, in the inſtance before us, be worth the pains of correcting?

I SHOULD think ſo, returned I, in your caſe. But let me firſt hear the judgment you form of yourſelf, before I trouble you with that which I and your other friends make of you.

I CANNOT but think, reſumed he, that my ſituation at preſent muſt appear very ridiculous. I am forced into an *apology* for my own conduct, in a very nice affair, which it might become another, rather than myſelf, to make for me. In order to this, I am conſtrained to reveal to you the very ſecrets, that is, the foibles and weakneſſes, of my own heart. I am to lay myſelf open and naked before you. This would be an unwelcome taſk to moſt men.

men. But your friendſhip, and the confidence I have in your affection, prevail over all ſcruples. Hitherto your friend hath uſed the common privilege of wearing a diſguiſe, of maſking himſelf, as the poet makes his hero, in a *cloud*, which is of uſe to keep off the too near and curious inſpection both of friends and enemies. But, at your bidding, it falls off, and you are now to ſee him in his juſt proportion and true features.

My beſt friend, proceeded he with an air of earneſtneſs and recollection, it is now above forty years that I have lived in this world: and in all the rational part of that time there hath not, I believe, a ſingle day paſſed without an ardent longing for ſuch a retreat from it, as you ſee me at length bleſſed with. You have heard me repeat ſome verſes, which were made by me ſo early as the age of *thirteen*, and in which that inclination is expreſſed as ſtrongly, as in any thing I

have ever ſaid or written on that ſubject [e]. Hence you may gueſs the proper turn and bias of my nature; which began ſo ſoon, and hath continued thus long, to ſhow itſelf in the conſtant workings of that paſſion.

EVEN in my earlieſt years at ſchool, you will hardly imagine how uneaſy conſtraint of every kind was to me, and with what delight I broke away from the cuſtomary ſports and paſtimes of that age, to ſaunter the time away by myſelf, or with a companion, if I could meet with any ſuch, of my own humour. The ſame inclination purſued me to college; where a private walk, with a book or friend, was beyond any amuſement, which, in that ſprightly ſeaſon of life, I had any acquaintance with. It is with a fond indulgence my memory even now returns to theſe paſt pleaſures. It was in thoſe

[e] Theſe verſes are inſerted in one of his *Eſſays*, and in ſome editions of his works.

retired

retired ramblings that a thouſand charming perceptions and bright ideas would ſtream in upon me. The muſe was kindeſt in thoſe hours: and, I know not how, Philoſophy herſelf would *oftner* meet me amidſt the willows of the CAM, than in the formal ſchools of ſcience, within the walls of my college, or in my tutor's chamber.

I UNDERSTAND, ſaid I; the true ſecret of that matter. You had now contracted an intimacy with the poets, and others of the fanciful tribe. You was even admitted of their company; and it was but fit you ſhould adopt their ſentiments, and ſpeak their language. Hence thoſe day-dreams of *ſhade and ſilence*, and I know not what viſions, which tranſport the minds of young men, on their entrance into theſe regions of *Parnaſſus*.

IT ſhould ſeem then, returned he, by your way of expreſſing it, as if you thought

thought this paſſion for *ſhade and ſilence* was only pretended to on a principle of *faſhion*; or, at moſt, was catched by the lovers of poetry from each other, in the way of *ſympathy*, without nature's having any hand at all in the production of it.

SOMETHING like that, I told him, was my real ſentiment; and that theſe agreeable reveries of the old poets had done much hurt by being taken too ſeriouſly. Were HORACE and VIRGIL, think you, as much in earneſt as you appear to be, when they were crying out perpetually on their favourite theme of *otium* and *ſeceſſus*, "they, who lived and died in a court?"

I BELIEVE, ſaid he, they were, and that the ſhort accounts we have of their lives ſhew it, though a perfect diſmiſſion from the court was what they could not obtain, or had not the reſolution to inſiſt upon. But pray, upon your principles, that all this

this is but the enchantment of *example* or *faſhion*, how came it to paſs, that the firſt ſeducers of the family, the old poets themſelves, had fallen into theſe notions? They were ſurely no pretenders. They could only write from the heart. And methinks it were more candid, as well as more reaſonable, to account for this paſſion, which hath ſo conſtantly ſhewn itſelf in their ſucceſſors, from the ſame reaſon. It is likely indeed, and ſo much I can readily allow, that the early reading of the poets might contribute ſomething to confirm and ſtrengthen my natural bias [*f*].

But let the matter reſt for the preſent. I would now go on with the detail of my own life and experience, ſo

[*f*] "Perhaps, ſays he, (ſpeaking of the poets) it was the immature and immoderate love of them, which ſtampt firſt, or rather engraved, the characters in me: they were like letters cut in the bark of a young tree, which with the tree ſtill grow proportionably." [*Eſſay on himſelf.*]

proper,

proper, as I think, to convince you that what I am pleading for is the reſult of nature.

I WAS ſaying how agreeably my youth paſſed in theſe reveries, if you will have it ſo, and eſpecially *inter ſylvas academi*:

Dura ſed emovere loco me tempora grato,
Civiliſque rudem belli tulit æſtus in arma.

You know the conſequence. This civil turmoil drove me from the ſhelter of retirement into the heat and buſtle of life; from thoſe ſtudies which, as you ſay, had enchanted my youth, into buſineſs and action of all ſorts. I lived in the world: I converſed familiarly with the great. A change like this, one would ſuppoſe, were enough to undo the prejudices of education. But the very reverſe happened. The further I engaged, and the longer I continued in this ſcene, the greater my impatience was of retiring from it.

BUT

But you will ſay, my old vice was nouriſhed in me by living in the neighbourhood of books and letters [*g*]. I was yet in the fairy land of the Muſes; and, under theſe circumſtances, it was no wonder that neither arms nor buſineſs, nor a court, could prevent the mind from returning to its old bias. All this may be true. And yet, I think, if that court had contained many ſuch perſons as ſome I knew in it, neither the diſtractions of buſineſs on the one hand, nor the blandiſhments of the Muſe on the other, could have diſpoſed me to leave it. But there were few Lord Falklands — And unhappily my admiration of that nobleman's worth and honour [*b*] created

[*g*] "When the civil war broke out, his [Mr. Cowley's] affection to the king's cauſe drew him to *Oxford*, as ſoon as it began to be the chief ſeat of the royal party." [Dr. Sprat's life of him.]

[*b*] Dr. Sprat tells us in *his life*, "That, during his reſidence at *Oxford*, he had the entire friendſhip an

an invincible averſion to the reſt, who had little reſemblance of his virtues.

I WOULD not be thought, ſaid I, to detract from ſo accompliſhed a character as that of the Lord FALKLAND; but ſurely there was ſomething in his notions of honour —

NOT a word, interrupted he eagerly, that may but ſeem to throw a ſhade on a virtue the brighteſt and pureſt that hath done honour to theſe later ages.— But I turn from a ſubject that intereſts me too much, and would lead me too far. Whatever attractions there might be in

of my Lord FALKLAND, one of the principal ſecretaries of ſtate. That affection was contracted by the agreement of their learning and manners. For you may remember, Sir, [addreſſing himſelf to Mr. M. CLIFFORD] we have often heard Mr. COWLEY admire him, not only for the profoundneſs of his knowledge, which was applauded by all the world, but more eſpecially for thoſe qualities which he himſelf more regarded, for *his generoſity of mind, and his neglect of the vain pomp of human greatneſs.*"

ſuch

ſuch a place, and in ſuch *friendſhips*, the iniquity of the times ſoon forced me from them. Yet I had the leſs reaſon to complain, as my next removal was into the family of ſo beneficent a patron as the Lord JERMYN, and into the court of ſo accompliſhed a princeſs as the QUEEN MOTHER.

MY reſidence, you know, was now for many years in *France*; a country, which piques itſelf on all the refinements of civility. Here the world was to appear to me in its faireſt form, and, it was not doubted, would put on all its charms to wean me from the love of a ſtudious retired life. I will not ſay I was diſappointed in this expectation. All that the elegance of poliſhed manners could contribute to make ſociety attractive, was to be found in this new ſcene. My ſituation, beſides, was ſuch, that I came to have a ſort of familiarity with greatneſs. Yet ſhall I confeſs my inmoſt ſentiments of

of this ſplendid life to you? I found it empty, fallacious, and even diſguſting. The outſide indeed was fair. But to me, who had an opportunity of looking it through, nothing could be more deformed and hateful. All was ambition, intrigue, and falſhood. Every one intent on his own ſchemes, frequently wicked, always baſe and ſelfiſh. Great profeſſions of honour, of friendſhip, and of duty; but all ending in low views and ſordid practices. No truth, no ſincerity: without which, converſation is but words; and the poliſh of manners, the idleſt foppery.

SURELY, interpoſed I, this picture muſt be overcharged. Frailties and imperfections, no doubt, there will be in all ſocieties of men, eſpecially where there is room for competition in their purſuits of honour and intereſt. But your idea of a court is that of a den of thieves, only better dreſſed, and more civilized.

THAT

That however, ſaid he, is the idea under which truth obliges me to repreſent it. Believe me, I have been long enough acquainted with that country, to give you a pretty exact account of its inhabitants. Their ſole buſineſs is, to follow the humour of the prince, or of his favourite, to ſpeak the current language, to ſerve the preſent turn, and to cozen one another. In ſhort, their virtue is, civility; and their ſenſe, cunning. You will gueſs now, continued he, how uneaſy I muſt be in ſuch company; I, who cannot lie, though it were to make a friend, or ruin an enemy; who have been taught to bear no reſpect to any but true wiſdom; and, whether it be nature or education, could never endure (pardon the fooliſh boaſt) that hypocriſy ſhould uſurp the honours, and triumph in the ſpoils, of virtue.

NAY further, my good friend, (for I muſt tell you all I know of myſelf, though it expoſe me ever ſo much to the charge of folly, or even vanity) I was not born for courts and general converſation. Beſides the unconquerable averſion I have to knaves and fools, (though theſe laſt, but that they are commonly knaves too, I could bring myſelf to tolerate): beſides this uncouthly humour, I have another of ſo odd a kind, that I almoſt want words to expreſs myſelf intelligibly to you. It is a ſort of capricious delicacy, which occaſions a wide difference in my eſtimation of thoſe characters, in which the world makes no diſtinction. It is not enough to make me converſe with eaſe and pleaſure with a man, that I ſee no notorious vices, or even obſerve ſome conſiderable virtues in him. His good qualities muſt have a certain grace, and even his ſenſe muſt be of a cer-

tain turn, to give me a reliſh of his converſation.

I SEE you ſmile at this talk, and am aware how fantaſtic this ſqueamiſhneſs muſt appear to you. But it is with men and manners, as with the forms and aſpects of natural things. A thouſand objects recal ideas, and excite ſenſations in my mind, which ſeem to be not perceived, or not heeded, by other men. The look of a country, the very ſhading of a landſkip, ſhall have a ſenſible effect on me, which they, who have as good eyes, appear to make no account of. It is juſt the ſame with the characters of men. I conceive a diſguſt at ſome, and a ſecret regard for others, whom many, I believe, would eſtimate juſt alike. And what is worſe, a long and general converſation hath not been able to cure me of this foible. I queſtion, ſaid he, turning himſelf to me, but, if I was called upon to aſſign the reaſons of that entire af-

fection, which knits me to thy beſt friend, they would be reſolved at laſt into a ſomething, which they, who love him perhaps as well, would have no idea of.

He ſaid this in a way that diſarmed me, or I had it in my mind to have rallied him on his doctrine of *occult qualities* and *unintelligible* forms. I therefore contented myſelf with ſaying, that I muſt not hear him go on at this ſtrange rate; and aſked him if it was poſſible he could ſuffer himſelf to be biaſſed, in an affair of this moment, by ſuch whimſies?

Those whimſies, reſumed he, had a real effect. But conſider further, the endleſs impertinencies of converſation; the diſſipation, and loſs of time; the diverſion of the mind from all that is truly uſeful or inſtructive, from what a reaſonable man would or ſhould delight in: add to theſe, the vexations of buſineſs; the ſlavery of dependence, the diſcourteſies

teſies of ſome, the groſſer injuries of others; the danger, or the ſcorn, to which virtue is continually ſubject; in ſhort, the knavery, or folly, or malevolence, of all around you; and tell me, if any thing but the unhappy times, and a ſenſe of duty, could have detained a man of my temper and principles ſo long in a ſtation of life, ſo very uneaſy and diſguſting to me.

NOTHING is eaſier, ſaid I, than to exaggerate the inconveniencies of any ſituation. The world and the court have doubtleſs theirs. But you ſeem to forget one particular; that the *unhappy times* you ſpeak of, and the ſtate of the court, were an excuſe for part of the diſagreeable circumſtances you have mentioned. The face of things is now altered. The ſtorm is over. A calm has ſucceeded. And why ſhould not you take the benefit of theſe halcyon days, in which ſo many

others have found their eaſe, and even enjoyment?

THESE halcyon days, returned he, are not, alas! what unexperienced men are ready to repreſent them. The ſame vices, the ſame follies, prevail ſtill, and are even multiplied and enflamed by proſperity. A ſuffering court, if any, might be expected to be the ſeedplot of virtues. But, to ſatisfy your ſcruples, I have even made a trial of theſe happier times. All I wiſhed to myſelf from the happieſt, was but ſuch a return for my paſt ſervices, as might enable me to retire with decency. Such a return I ſeem not to have merited. And I care not at this time of day to waſte more of my precious time in deſerving a better treatment.

YOUR day, ſaid I, is not ſo far ſpent, as to require this haſty determination. Beſides, if this be all, the world may be apt

to

to cenſure your retreat, as the effect of chagrin and diſappointment.

His colour roſe, as I ſaid this. The world, reſumed he, will cenſure as it ſees fit. I muſt have leave at length to judge for myſelf in what ſo eſſentially concerns my own happineſs. Though if ever *chagrin* may be pleaded as a reaſon for retirement, perhaps nobody had ever a better right than I have to plead it. You know what hath happened of late, to give me a diſguſt to courts. You know the view I had in my late comedy [*i*], and the grounds I had to expect

[*i*] *The cutter of Coleman-ſtreet*; the occaſion and purpoſe of which was this. At the Reſtoration, there was not a ſet of men more troubleſome to the miniſtry than the cavalier officers; amongſt whom had crept in all the profligate of broken fortunes, to ſhare in the merits and rewards of that name. Cowley writ this comedy to unmaſk theſe wretches, and might reaſonably pretend to ſome thanks for it. But, contrary to expectation, this very attempt raiſed a ſtorm againſt him even at court, which beat vio-

that it would not be ill taken. But you know too the iſſue of that attempt. And ſhould I, after this experience of courtly gratitude, go about to ſolicit their favours?

BUT, to let you ſee that I am ſwayed by better motives than thoſe of *chagrin*, I ſhall not conceal from you what I am proud enough to think of my TALENTS, as well as temper.

THERE are but TWO ſorts of men, purſued he, that ſhould think of living in a court, however it be that we ſee animals of all ſorts, clean and unclean, enter into it.

THE ONE is, of thoſe ſtrong and active ſpirits that are formed for buſineſs, whoſe ambition reconciles them to the buſtle of life, and whoſe capacity fits

lently upon him. See his preface to that play in the later editions in 8°.

them

them for the diſcharge of its functions. Theſe, eſpecially if of noble birth and good fortunes, are deſtined to fill the firſt offices in a ſtate; and if, peradventure, they add virtue to their other parts and qualities, are the bleſſings of the age they live in. Some few ſuch there have been in former times; and the preſent, it may be, is not wholly without them.

THE OTHER ſort, are what one may properly enough call, if the phraſe were not ſomewhat uncourtly, the MOB OF COURTS; they, who have vanity or avarice without ambition, or ambition without talents. Theſe, by aſſiduity, good luck, and the help of their vices (for they would ſcorn to earn advancement, if it were to be had, by any worthy practices), may in time ſucceed to the lower poſts in a government; and together make up that ſhewy, ſervile, ſelfiſh crowd, we dignify with the name of COURT.

Now,

Now, though I think too juſtly of myſelf to believe I am qualified to enter into the *former* of theſe liſts, you may conclude, if you pleaſe, that I am too proud to brigue for an admiſſion into the *latter*. I pretend not to great abilities of any kind; but let me preſume a little in ſuppoſing, that I may have ſome too good to be thrown away on ſuch company.

HERE, my lord, the unuſual freedom, and even indecency, of Mr. COWLEY's invective againſt courts, tranſported me ſo far, that I could not forbear turning upon him with ſome warmth. Surely, ſaid I, my friend is much changed from what I always conceived of him. This heat of language, from one of your candour, ſurprizes me equally with the injuſtice of it. It is ſo far from *calm reaſoning*, that it wants but little, methinks, of downright railing. I believe,

lieve, continued I, that I think more highly, that is, more juſtly, of Mr. COWLEY in every reſpect, than he allows himſelf to do. Yet I ſee not that either his time, or his talents, would be miſemployed in the ſervices, he ſo much undervalues. Permit me to ſay, your reſentment hath carried you too far; and that you do not enough conſider the friends you left at court, or the noble lord that wiſhes your return thither.

I DO, ſaid he haſtily, conſider both. But, with your leave, ſince I am forced to defend myſelf againſt an ignominious charge, I muſt do myſelf the right to aſſume what I think belongs to me. I repeat it; I have long thought my time loſt in the poor amuſements and vanities of the great world, and have felt an impatience to get into a quiet ſcene, where, ſlender as my talents are, I might employ them to better purpoſe.

AND

And think not, proceeded he, that I am carried to this choice by any thing ſo frivolous as the idleneſs of a poetical fancy. Not but the Muſe, which hath been the darling of my youth, may deſerve to be the companion of my riper age. For I am far from renouncing an art, which, unprofitable as it hath ever been to me, is always entertaining: and when employed, as I mean it ſhall be, in other ſervices than thoſe by which a voluptuous court ſeems willing to diſgrace it, I ſee not what there is in this amuſement of poetry, for the ſevereſt cenſor of life and manners to take offence at. Yet ſtill I intend it for an amuſement. My ſerious occupations will be very different; ſuch as you, my friend, cannot diſapprove, and ſhould encourage. But I have opened to you my intentions more than once, and need not give you the trouble at this time to hear me explain them.

You

You mean, interpoſed I, to apply yourſelf to *natural* and *religious* enquiries. Your deſign is commendable; and I would not diſſuade you from it. But what ſhould hinder your purſuing this deſign as well in ſociety as in this ſolitude?

WHAT, at COURT, returned he, where the only object, that all men are in queſt of, is GAIN; and the only deity they acknowledge, FORTUNE? Or ſay that ſuch idolatries did not prevail there, how ſhall the mind be calm enough for ſo ſublime enquiries? or where, but in this ſcene of genuine nature, is there an opportunity to indulge in them? Here, if any where, is the obſervation of the poet verified, DEUS EST QUODCUNQUE VIDES. Look round, my friend, on this florid earth, on the various claſſes of *animals* that inhabit, and the countleſs

vegetable tribes that adorn it. Here is the proper ſchool of wiſdom,

"And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in ſtones, and good in every thing [*k*]."

INFINITE are the uſes, continued he, which would reſult from this method of applying experiment and obſervation to *Natural Science*. I have taken occaſion, you know, to offer a ſlight ſketch of

[*k*] SHAKESPEAR. *As you like it*. A. II. S. 1.— There is a quaintneſs in theſe lines of the great poet, which however are not unlike ſome of Mr. COWLEY's, addreſſed to J. EVELYNE, Eſq.

"Where does the wiſdom and the pow'r divine,
In a more bright and ſweet reflexion ſhine?
Where do we finer ſtrokes and colours ſee
Of the Creator's real poetry,
Than when we with attention look
Upon the third day's volume of the book?
If we could open and intend our eye,
We all, like *Moſes*, ſhould eſpy,
Ev'n in a *Buſh*, the radiant Deity."

them

them to the public very lately [*l*]. But the principal I would draw from it to myſelf ſhould be, to inure the mind to juſt conceptions of the divine nature; that ſo, with the better advantage, I might turn myſelf to the awful ſtudy of his *Word*. And here, my friend, I am ſenſible how much I may expect to be animated by your zeal, and enlightened by your inſtruction. In the mean time, I pretend to poſſeſs ſome qualities, which, if rightly applied, may not be unſuitable to ſo high an undertaking. I feel myſelf impelled by an eager curioſity: I have much patience, and ſome ſkill in making experiments. I may even be allowed to boaſt of a readineſs in the learned languages; and am not without a tincture of ſuch other ſtudies, as the ſucceſsful proſecution of PHYSICS, and ſtill more of DIVINITY, requires. You may further

[*l*] In the PREFACE to his *Propoſition for the advancement of experimental philoſophy*, firſt printed in 1661. *See the edition in* 24^to^, *Lond. for H. Herringham.*

impute

impute to me, if you pleaſe, an ingenuous love of truth, and an ordinary degree of judgement to diſcern it.

THESE, concluded he, are the TALENTS, of which I ſpoke to you ſo proudly; and, with the help of theſe (eſpecially if you allow me *one* other, the power of *communicating* what I may chance to learn of natural or divine things), I might hope to render a better account of this ſolitude, than of any employments I could reaſonably aſpire to, in the world of men and of buſineſs.

HE ſaid this with an air of ſolemnity, which left me a little at a loſs what to reply to him, when he relieved my perplexity by adding, "but, though there was nothing of all this in the caſe, and my zeal for promoting knowledge in this private way, were as lightly to be accounted of, as *that*, which led me to propoſe the more extenſive ſcheme I before mentioned,

mention, probably will be, yet what ſhould draw me from this leiſure of a learned retirement? For though I pleaſe myſelf with the proſpect of doing ſome *public* ſervice by my ſtudies, yet need I bluſh to own to my learned friend, the fondneſs I ſhould ſtill have for them, were they only to end in my own *private* enjoyment? Yes, let me open my whole ſoul to you. I have ever delighted in letters, and have even found them, what the world is well enough content they ſhould be, their own reward. I doubt, if this language would be underſtood in all companies. And let others ſpeak as they find. But to me the year would drag heavily, and life itſelf be no life, if it were not quickened by theſe ingenuous pleaſures.

INDEED, were it only for the very quiet and indolence of mind, which retirement promiſes, why ſhould I be envied

this calm in the decline of a troubled life?—But let the Muſe ſpeak for me:

"After long toils and voyages in vain,
This quiet port let my toſt veſſel gain;
Of heav'nly reſt this earneſt to me lend,
Let my life ſleep, and learn to love her end."

AND what if they, who have not the means of enjoying this *reſt*, ſubmit to the drudgery of buſineſs? Is that a reaſon for me to continue in it, who have made my fortune, even to the extent of my wiſhes? I ſee you ſmile at this boaſt. But where would you have me ſtop in my deſires; or what is it you would have me underſtand by the myſterious language of *making a fortune?* Is it two hundred a year, or four, or a thouſand? Say, where ſhall we fix, or what limits will you undertake to preſcribe to the vague and ſhifting notion of a competency? Or, ſhall we own the truth at once, that every thing is a *competency* which a man is contented to live upon, and

and that therefore it varies only, as his desires are more or less contracted?

To talk at any other rate of a *man's fortune*, is surely to expose one's self to the ridicule, which the philosopher, you know, threw on the restless humour of king Pyrrhus. 'Tis whim, chimera, madness, or what you will, except sober reason and common sense. Yet still the world cries, "What! sit down with a pittance, when the ways of honour and fortune are open to you? take up with what may barely satisfy, when you have so fair a chance for affluence, and even superfluity?"

Alas! and will that *affluence*, then, more than satisfy? or can it be worth the while to labour, for a *superfluity*?

'Tis true, the violence of the times, in which it was my fortune to bear a part, had left me bare and unprovided even

of thoſe moderate accommodations, which my education and breeding might demand, and which a parent's piety had indeed bequeathed to me. It was but fitting then I ſhould ſtrive to repair this loſs; and the rather, as my honeſt ſervices gave me leave to hope for a ſpeedy reparation. And thus far I was contented to try my fortune in the court, though at the expence of much uneaſy attendance and ſollicitation. But, ſeeing that this aſſiduity was without effect, and that the bounty of two excellent perſons [*m*] hath now ſet me above the neceſſity of continuing it, what madneſs were it to embark again

"Fluctibus in mediis et tempeſtatibus urbis?"

So that if you will needs be urging me with the ceaſeleſs exhortation of

[*m*] Dr. SPRAT tells us, "That he had obtained a plentiful eſtate by the favour of my Lord ST. ALBANS, and the bounty of my lord duke of BUCKINGHAM." [See his *Life*.]

"I, bone, quo virtus tua te vocat: I pede fausto,
Grandia laturus meritorum præmia:—"

I must take leave to remind you of the sage reply that was made to it. It was, you know, by an old soldier, who found himself exactly in my situation. The purse, which he had lost by one accident, he had recovered by another. The conclusion was, that he had no mind, in this different state of affairs, to turn adventurer again, and expose himself to the same perilous encounters:

"Post hæc ille catus, quantumvis RUSTICUS, Ibit,
Ibit eo, quo vis QUI ZONAM PERDIDIT, inquit."

In one word, my friend, I am happy here, as you see me, in my little farm, which yet is large enough to answer all my real necessities; and I am not in the humour of him in the fable [n], to

[n] Meaning *The true history of* Don Quixote; in which poor *Sancho Panca* is drawn into all ad-

fill my head with visions, and spend a wretched life in quest of the *flying island*.

And now, added he, you have before you in one view the principal reasons that have determined me to this retreat. I might have enlarged on each more copiously; but I know to whom I speak: and perhaps to such a one I might even have spared a good deal of what I have now been offering, from the several considerations of my TEMPER, TALENTS, and SITUATION.

Here he stopped. And now, my lord, it came to my turn to take the lead in this controversy. There was indeed an ample field before me. And, if the other side of the question afforded most matter for wit and declamation, mine had all the advantages of good sense and sound reason. The superiority was so

ventures, by the promise of his *knight*, to reward him in due time, with the government of an *island*.

apparent,

apparent, and my victory over him, in point of argument, ſo ſure, that I thought it needleſs and ungenerous to preſs him on every article of his defence, in which he had laid himſelf open to me.

YOUR lordſhip hath, no doubt, obſerved with wonder and with pity, the ſtrange ſpirit that runs through every part of it: the confined way of thinking, which hath crept upon him; the cynical ſeverity, he indulges againſt courts; the importance, he would ſometimes aſſume to his own character; the peeviſh turn of mind, that leads him to take offence at the lighter follies and almoſt excuſable vices of the great; in ſhort, the reſentment, the pique, the chagrin, which one overlooks in the hopeleſs ſuitor, or hungry poet, but which are very unaccountable in one of Mr. COWLEY's condition and ſituation.

HERE then, my lord, was a fair occaſion for a willing adverſary. But I ſpared the infirmities of my friend. I judged it beſt, too, to keep him in temper, and avoid that heat of altercation, which muſt have ariſen from touching theſe indiſcretions, as they deſerved. Your lordſhip ſees the reaſon I had for confining my reply to ſuch parts of his apology, as bore the faireſt ſhew of argument, and might be encountered without offence.

WHEN he had ended, therefore, with ſo formal a recapitulation of his diſcourſe, I thought it not amiſs to follow him in his own train; and, diſſembling the juſt exceptions I had to his vindication in other reſpects, "You have proceeded, ſaid I, in a very diſtinct method, and have ſaid as much, I believe, on the ſubject, as ſo bad a cauſe would admit. But if this indeed be all you have to alledge, for ſo uncommon a fancy, you muſt not think

think it ſtrange, if I pronounce it, without ſcruple, very inſufficient for your purpoſe.

For, to give your ſeveral pleas a diſtinct examination, what is that TEMPER, let me aſk, on which you inſiſt ſo much, but a wayward humour, which your true judgment ſhould correct and controul by the higher and more important regards of *duty?* Every man is born with ſome prevailing propenſity or other, which, if left to itſelf, and indulged beyond certain bounds, would grow to be very injurious to himſelf and ſociety. There is ſomething, no doubt, amuſing in the notion of *retirement*. The very word implies eaſe and quiet, and ſelf-enjoyment. And who doubts, that in the throng and buſtle of life, moſt men are fond to image to themſelves, and even to wiſh for, a ſcene of more compoſure and tranquillity? It is juſt as natural as that the labourer ſhould long for his repoſe

at

at night; or that the ſoldier, amidſt the duſt and heat of a ſummer's march, ſhould wiſh for the conveniencies of ſhade and ſhelter. But what wild work would it make, if theſe ſo natural deſires ſhould be immediately gratified? if the labourer ſhould quit his plow, and the ſoldier his arms, to throw themſelves into the firſt ſhade or thicket that offered refreſhment? All you have therefore ſaid on this article can really ſtand for nothing in the eye of ſober reaſon, whatever figure it may make in the dreſs of your eloquence [o]. The inconveniencies of every ſtation are to be indured from the obligations of duty, and on account

[o] Lord BACON gives another account of this matter.—"As for the privateneſs of life of contemplative men, it is a theme ſo common to extol a private life, not taxed with ſenſuality and ſloth, in compariſon, and to the diſadvantage of a civil life, for ſafety, liberty, pleaſure, and dignity, *as no man handleth it, but handleth it well:* ſuch a conſonancy it hath to men's conceits in the expreſſing, and to men's conſents in the allowing." [*Adv. of Learning*, Book I.]

of

of the ſervices one is bound to render to himſelf and his country.

TRUE, replied he, if it appeared to be one's duty, or even intereſt, to continue in that ſtation. But what principle of conſcience binds me to a ſlaviſh dependance at court? or what intereſt, public or private, can be an equivalent for wearing theſe chains, when I have it in my power to throw them off, and redeem myſelf into a ſtate of liberty?

WHAT *Intereſt*, do you aſk, returned I? Why that great and extenſive one, which *ſociety* hath in an honeſt and capable man's continuing to bear a part in public affairs. For as to inducements of another kind, I may find occaſion hereafter to preſs them upon you more ſeaſonably. Conſider well with yourſelf, what would the conſequence be, if all men of honour and ability were to act upon your principles? What a world would this be, if

knaves

knaves and fools only had the management in their hands, and all the virtuous and wiſe, as it were by common conſent, were to withdraw from it? Nay, the iſſue would even be fatal to themſelves; and they would preſently find it impoſſible to taſte repoſe, even in their own ſanctuary of retirement.

SMALL need, replied he, to terrify one's ſelf with ſuch apprehenſions. The virtuous, at leaſt they who paſs for ſuch, will generally have ambition enough to keep them in the road of public employments. So long as there are ſuch things as riches and honours, courts will never be unfurniſhed of ſuitors, even from among the tribes of lettered and virtuous men. The deſperately bad, at leaſt, will never have the field left entirely to themſelves. And after all, the intereſt of men in office is, in the main, ſo providentially connected with ſome regard to the rules of honour and con-

ſcience, that there is ſeldom any danger that matters ſhould come to extremities under the *worſt* adminiſtration. And I doubt this is all we are to expect, or at leaſt to reckon upon with aſſurance, under the very *beſt*.

But my anſwer is more direct. It is not for your little friend to think of getting a ſeat in the cabinet-council, or of conducting the great affairs of the ſtate. He knows himſelf to be as unfit for thoſe high truſts, as he is incapable of aſpiring to them. Beſides, he does not allow himſelf to doubt of their being diſcharged with perfect ability, by the great perſons who now fill them. He, at leaſt, who occupies the foremoſt place of authority, is, by the allowance of all, to be paralleled with ANY that the wiſeſt prince hath ever advanced to that ſtation [*p*.] And when ſo conſummate a

[*p*] The juſtneſs of this encomium on Lord CLARENDON will hardly be diſputed by any man, whoſe opinion is worth regarding.—What pity, pilot

pilot ſits at the helm, it ſeems a matter of little moment by what hands the veſſel of the commonwealth is navigated.

that Mr. COWLEY's connexions with ſome perſons, indevoted to the excellent Chancellor, kept him at a diſtance from a man, ſo congenial to himſelf, and for whom he could not but entertain the higheſt eſteem! The Chancellor, though he could not be expected to take him out of the hands of his old patrons, ſeems, yet, to have been generous enough to Mr. COWLEY, not to reſent thoſe connexions; as may be gathered from the handſome teſtimony, paid to his merit, in the *Continuation of the Hiſtory of his own Life*. Speaking of B. JOHNSON, he ſays—"He [BEN JOHNSON] was the beſt judge of, and fitteſt to preſcribe rules to, poetry and poets, of any man who had lived with, or before him, or ſince; *If Mr.* COWLEY *had not made a flight beyond all men*; with that modeſty yet, to aſcribe much of this, to the example and learning of BEN JOHNSON."—Among the other infelicities of men of genius, ONE is, and not the leaſt, that it rarely happens to them to have the chooſing of the perſons, to whom they would moſt wiſh to be obliged. The ſenſibility of their gratitude being equal to their other parts and virtues, the man, whoſe favour they chance firſt to experience, is ſure of their conſtant ſervices and attachment through life, how ſtrongly ſoever their intereſt, and even their judgement, may *draw* another way.

I could not agree with him in this concluding remark, and much leſs in the high-flown encomium which introduced it [q]. But, waving theſe leſſer matters, I contented myſelf with obſerving, "That let him put what gloſs he would on this humour of declining civil buſineſs, it muſt needs be conſidered by all unbiaſſed perſons, as highly prejudicial to public order and government; that, if good men would not be employed, the bad muſt; and that, to ſay the leaſt, the cauſe of learning and virtue muſt ſuffer exceedingly in the eyes of men, when they ſee thoſe very qualities, which alone can render us uſeful to the world, diſpoſe us to fly from it.

For as to the *plea*, continued I, of employing them to better purpoſe in the

[q] The reader is not to forget, that Mr. Sprat is writing to the Lord St. Albans, and was, at this time, chaplain to the duke of Buckingham.

way

way of *private and ſolitary* CONTEMPLATION, I can hold it for little better than enthuſiaſm. Several perſons, I know, would give it a worſe name, and ſay, as TACITUS ſomewhere does, that it ſerves only for a ſpecious cover to that love of eaſe and ſelf-indulgence, which he will have to be at the bottom of ſuch pretences [*r*]. But even with the beſt conſtruction, the matter was capable of, he could never, I inſiſted, juſtify that plea to the underſtandings of prudent and knowing men. We allow the obſcure pedant to talk high of the dignity of his office, and magnify, as much as he pleaſes, the importance of his ſpeculations. Such an indulgence ſerves to keep him in humour with himſelf, and may be a means to convert a low and

[*r*] "Ingenium illuſtre altioribus ſtudiis juvenis admodum dedit: non, ut PLERIQUE, UT NOMINE MAGNIFICO SEGNE OTIUM VELARET, ſed quo firmior adverſus fortuita rempublicam capeſſeret." [*Hiſt.* IV. 5.]—Part of the fine character given us of HELVIDIUS PRISCUS.

plodding

plodding genius to the only uſe, of which it is capable. But for a man of experience in affairs, and who is qualified to ſhine in them, to hold this language, is very extraordinary.

I saw with what impatience he heard me, and therefore took care to add, "'Tis true, the ſtudies to which you would devote yourſelf, are the nobleſt in the world of ſcience. For *Divinity*, the very name ſpeaks its elogium. And the countenance which his majeſty is pleaſed, in his true wiſdom, to give to *natural ſcience*, muſt be thought to enoble that branch of learning beyond all others, that are merely of human conſideration. Yet ſtill, my friend, what need of taking theſe ſtudies out of the hands of thoſe, to whom they are properly entruſted? Religion is very ſafe in the boſom of the national church. And queſtions of natural ſcience will doubtleſs be effectually clear-

ed and ventilated in the *New Society* [5], and in the ſchools of our *Univerſities*. It could never be his majeſty's intention to thin his court, for the ſake of furniſhing ſtudents in natural philoſophy.

And can you then, interpoſed he, in your concern for what you very improperly call my intereſts, allow yourſelf to ſpeak ſo coolly of the great intereſts of natural and divine truth? Is religion a trade to be confined to the craftſmen? Or, are fellows of colleges and of the Royal ſociety, if ſuch we are to have, the only perſons concerned to adore God in the wonders of his creation? Pardon me, my friend: I know you mean nothing leſs; but the ſtrange indifference of your phraſe, provokes me to this expoſtulation.

You warm yourſelf, returned I, too haſtily. My deſign was only to ſuggeſt,

[5] THE ROYAL SOCIETY; not yet inſtituted, but much talked of at this time.

that

that as there are certain orders of men appointed for the ſole purpoſe of ſtudying divinity, and advancing philoſophy, I did not ſee that a man of buſineſs was obliged to deſert his proper ſtation for the ſake of either.

I SUSPECT, ſaid he, there may be ſome equivocation wrapped up in that word *obliged*. All I know is, that I ſhall ſpend my time more innocently, at leaſt; and, I preſume to think, more uſefully in thoſe ſtudies, than in that ſlippery *ſtation*, if it may deſerve to be called one, of court favour and dependance. And if I extended the obſervation to many others, that are fond to take up their reſidence in theſe quarters, I cannot believe I ſhould do them any injuſtice.

I CANNOT tell, returned I, againſt whom this cenſure is pointed. But I know there are many of the graveſt characters, and even lights and fathers of

the church, who do not conſider it as inconſiſtent, either with their duty, or the uſefulneſs of their profeſſion, to continue in that ſtation.

O! MISTAKE me not, replied he: I intended no reflexion on any of the clergy, and much leſs on the great prelates of the church, for their attendance in the courts of princes. Theirs is properly an exempt caſe. They are the authorized guides and patterns of life. Their great abilities indeed qualify them, above all others, for ſerving the cauſe of ſcience and religion, by their private ſtudies and meditations. But they very properly conſider too, that part of their duty is to enlighten the ignorant of all ranks, by their wiſe and pious diſcourſe, and to awe and reclaim the wandering of all denominations, by their example. Hence it is, that I cannot enough admire the zeal of ſo many paſtors of the church; who, though the ſlaviſh manners and liber-

libertiniſm of a court muſt be more than ordinarily offenſive to men of their characters, continue to diſcharge their office ſo painfully, and yet ſo punctually, in that ſituation.

HERE, my lord, obſerving my friend for once to deliver himſelf reaſonably, I was encouraged to add, that, ſince he was ſo juſt to maintain the commerce of good and wiſe churchmen in the great world to be, as it truly was, a matter of duty, he ſhould alſo have the candour to own, that his withdrawing from it was, at leaſt, a work of *Supererogation*.

IT might be ſo, he ſaid; but, though our church gave no encouragement to think we *merit* by ſuch works, he did not know that it condemned and utterly forbad them.

O! BUT, returned I, if that be all, and you acknowledge at laſt that your *retir-*

ing is no matter of duty, it will be eaſy to advance another ſtep, and demonſtrate to you, that ſuch a project is, in your caſe, altogether unreaſonable [*t*].

For, notwithſtanding all you have ſaid, in the ſpirit and language of ſtoicism, of the comforts of your preſent SITUATION, will you ſeriouſly undertake to perſuade me that they are in any degree comparable to what you might propoſe to yourſelf, by returning to a life of buſineſs? Is the littleneſs, the obſcurity, and pardon me if I even ſay, the meanneſs of this retreat, to be put in competition with the liberal and even ſplendid proviſion, which your friends at court will eaſily be able to make for you? is it nothing, my friend, (for let us talk common

[*t*] We have in this remonſtrance that follows, the uſual language of thoſe we call *our friends*; which may ſometimes be the *cauſe*, but is oftner the *pretence*, of ambition. Hear how gravely Sir DUDLEY CARLTON, who loved buſineſs, and drudged on in it all his life, is pleaſed, in an evil hour, to expreſs

ſenſe,

ſenſe, and not bewilder ourſelves with the viſions of philoſophy) is it nothing to live in a well-furniſhed houſe, to keep a good table, to command an equipage, to have many friends and dependants, to be courted by inferiors, to be well received by the great, and to be ſomebody even in the *preſence?*

AND what if, in order to compaſs ſuch things, ſome little devoirs and aſſiduities are expected? Is it not the general practice? And what every body ſubmits to, can it be ignominious? Is this any thing more than conforming one's ſelf to the neceſſary ſubordination of ſociety? Or, what if ſome time paſſes in theſe ſervices, which a preſent humour ſuggeſts might be more agreeably ſpent in other amuſe-

himſelf: "The beſt is, I was never better, and were it not more for a neceſſity that is impoſed by the EXPECTATION OF FRIENDS, not to ſtand at a ſtay and SENESCERE, whilſt a man is young, than for ambition, I would not complain myſelf of my misfortunes." [Sir RALPH WINWOOD's *Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 45.]

ments? The recompence cannot be far off; and, in the mean time, the luſtre and very agitation of a life of buſineſs, hath ſomething in it ſprightly and amuſing. Beſides, yours is not the caſe of one that is entering, for the firſt time, on a courſe of expectation. Your buſineſs is half done. The prince is favourable; and there are of his miniſters that reſpect and honour you. Your ſervices are well known; your reputation is fair; your connexions great; and the ſeaſon inviting. What, with all theſe advantages, forego the court in a moping mood, or, as angry men uſe, run to moralize in a cloiſter!

I WAS proceeding in the warmth of this remonſtrance, when, with a reproachful ſmile, he turned upon me, and, in a kind of rapture, repeated the following lines of SPENSER:

"Full little knoweſt thou, that haſt not tried,
What hell it is in ſuing long to bide:

To

To loſe good days, that might be better ſpent;
To waſte long nights in penſive diſcontent:
To ſpeed to-day, to be put back to-morrow;
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and ſorrow;
To have thy prince's grace, yet want his peeres[u];
To have thy aſkings, yet wait many yeers[w];
To fret thy ſoul with croſſes and with cares;
To eat thy heart through comfortleſs deſpaires;
To faun, to crouche, to wait, to ride, to ronne;
To ſpend, to give, to want, to be undonne."

This, ſaid he, is my anſwer once for all to your long ſtring of interrogatories.

[u] That Mr. COWLEY *had* his prince's grace, appears from what the king ſaid of him, on the news of his death: "*That he had not left a* BETTER *man behind him in* England." And this was *grace* enough, in reaſon, from SUCH a prince.—How it came to paſs that he *wanted* the grace of his peeres (if, indeed, he *did* want it), hath been explained in a note, p. 109, 110.

[w] The application of this line is the affair of the *Maſterſhip of the* Savoy; "which, though granted, ſays Mr. WOOD, to his higheſt merit by both the CHARLESES I and II, yet by certain perſons, enemies to the Muſes, he loſt that place."—But this was not the worſt. For, ſuch is the hard lot of unſucceſsful men, the *Savoy-miſſing* COWLEY became

I learnt

I learnt it of one that had much experience in courts: and I thought it worth imprinting on my memory, to have it in readiness on ſuch an occaſion. Or, if you would rather have my anſwer in my own words, the Muſe ſhall give it you in a little poem, ſhe dictated very lately [*x*]. It may ſhew you perhaps, that, though my nature be ſomewhat melancholy, I am not *moping*; and that I can moralize, and even *complain*, as I have reaſon to do, without being *angry*.

THE look and tone of voice, with which he ſaid this, a little diſconcerted me. But I recovered myſelf, and was going on to object to his unreaſonable

the object of ridicule, inſtead of pity, even to the wits themſelves; as may be ſeen in "*The ſeſſion of the poets*, amongſt *the miſcellaneous poems* publiſhed by Mr. DRYDEN."

Quid DOMINI facient, audent ſi talia FURES?

[*x*] Printed among his works, under the name of THE COMPLAINT. The relation, it has to the ſubject debated, made me think it not amiſs to print it at the end of this Dialogue.—It muſt raiſe one's indignation to find that ſo juſt, ſo delicate, and ſo

warmth, and the faſcination of this wicked poetry, when he ſtopped me with ſaying, "Come, no more of theſe remonſtrances and upbraidings. I have heard enough of your pleadings in a cauſe, which no eloquence can carry againſt my firm and fixed reſolutions. I have ſeen, beſides, the force you have done to yourſelf in this mock-combat. Your extreme friendlineſs hath even tempted you to act a part which your true ſenſe, and the very decorum of your profeſſion, I have obſerved through all your diſguiſes, has rendered painful to you. I will tell you my whole mind in one word. No inducements of what the world calls INTEREST, no views of HONOUR, no, nor what the poet aptly calls, SANCTISSIMA DIVITIARUM MAJESTAS [y], ſhall make me recede from the purpoſe I am bent upon, of conſecrating the remainder of a

manly *a complaint* ſhould be ſcoffed at, as it was by the wits before mentioned, under the name of THE PITIFUL MELANCHOLY.

[y] Juvenal, Sat. i. ver. 112.

comfort-

comfortleſs diſtracted life, to the ſweets of this obſcure retirement. Believe me, I have weighed it well, with all its inconveniencies. And I find them ſuch as are nothing to the agonies I have long felt in that troubled ſcene, to which you would recal me. If it hath any ingredients, which I cannot ſo well reliſh, they are ſuch as my friends, and, above all, ſuch as you, my beſt friend, may reconcile to me. Let me but have the pleaſure to ſee the few, I love and eſteem, in theſe ſhades, and I ſhall not regret their ſolitude.

And as for my much honoured friend, whoſe munificence hath placed me in them, I ſhall hope to ſatisfy him in the moſt effectual manner. Nothing, you will believe, could give me a pain equal to that of being ſuſpected of ingratitude towards my beſt benefactor. It was indeed with the utmoſt difficulty, that I conſtrained myſelf at laſt to think of leaving

leaving his ſervice. The truth is, he expoſtulated with me upon it pretty roundly; and though my reſolution was taken, I left him with the concern of not being able to give him entire ſatisfaction. Theſe repeated inſtances by you are a freſh proof of his goodneſs, and do me an honour I had little reaſon to expect from him. But his lordſhip's notions of life and mine are very different, as is fitting in perſons, whom fortune hath placed in two ſuch different ſituations. It becomes me to bear the moſt grateful remembrance of his kind intentions; and, for the reſt, I can aſſure myſelf, that his equity and nobleneſs of mind will permit an old ſervant to purſue, at length, his own inclinations.

HOWEVER, to repay his goodneſs as I can, and to teſtify all imaginable reſpect to his judgement, I have purpoſed to write my own APOLOGY to his lordſhip; and to repreſent to him, in a better manner,

ner, than I have done in this ſudden and unpremeditated converſation, the reaſons that have determined me to this reſolution. I have even made ſome progreſs in the deſign, and have digeſted into ſeveral *eſſays* the ſubſtance of ſuch reflexions as, at different times, have had moſt weight with me [z].

Hearing him ſpeak in ſo determined a manner, I was diſcouraged from preſſing

[z] Whether it were owing to his other occupations, or that he had no great confidence in the ſucceſs of this attempt, theſe *Eſſays*, which were to give entire ſatisfaction to his court-friend, in the affair of his retirement, went on very ſlowly. They were even left imperfect at his death, "a little before which (ſays Dr. SPRAT) he communicated to me his reſolution, to have dedicated them all to my Lord ST. ALBANS, as a teſtimony of his entire reſpects to him; and a *kind of apology* for having left human affairs in the height of his age, while he might have been ſerviceable to his country." However, if this apology had not the *intended* effect, it had a much better. Lords and wits may decide of the qualities of Mr. COWLEY's *head*, as they pleaſe; but, ſo long as theſe *Eſſays* remain, they will oblige all honeſt men *to love the language of his heart*.

him

him further with ſuch other conſiderations, as I had prepared on this argument. Only I could not help enforcing, in the warmeſt manner, and in terms your lordſhip would not allow me to uſe in this recital, what he himſelf had owned of your unexampled goodneſs to him; and the obligation which, I inſiſted, that muſt needs create in a generous mind, of paying an unreſerved obedience to your lordſhip's pleaſure. He gave me the hearing very patiently; but contented himſelf with repeating his deſign of juſtifying himſelf to your lordſhip in the apology he had before promiſed.

And now, reſumed he with an air of alacrity, ſince you know my whole mind, and that no remonſtrances can move me, confeſs the whole truth; acknowledge at laſt that you have diſſembled with me all this while, and that, in reality, you approve my reſolution. I know you do, my friend, though you ſtruggle hard

to

to conceal it. It cannot be otherwiſe. Nature, which linked our hearts together, had formed us in one mould. We have the ſame ſenſe of things; the ſame love of letters and of virtue. And though I would not ſollicit one of your years and your profeſſion to follow me into the ſhade, yet I know you ſo well [*a*], that you will preſerve in the world that equal frame of mind, that indifference to all earthly things, which I pretend to have carried with me into this ſolitude.

Go on, my friend, in this track; and be an example to the churchmen of our days, that the higheſt honours of the gown, which I eaſily foreſee are deſtined to your abilities, are not incompatible with the ſtricteſt purity of life, and the moſt heroic ſentiments of integrity and honour. Go, and adorn the dignities which are reſerved for you; and remember only in the heights of proſperity

[*a*] Alas! he was miſtaken.

to

to be what you are, to ſerve the world with vigour, yet ſo as to indulge with me

"THE GENEROUS SCORN
OF THINGS, FOR WHICH WE WERE NOT BORN [*b*]."

I BEGAN to be a little uneaſy at his long ſermon, when he broke it off with this couplet. The day by this time was pretty far advanced; and riſing from his ſeat, he propoſed to me to walk into his hermitage (ſo he called his houſe); where, he ſaid, I ſhould ſee how a philoſopher lived as well as talked. I ſtaid to dine, and ſpent a good part of the afternoon with him. We diſcourſed of various matters; but not a word more on what had occaſioned this viſit. Only he ſhewed me the *complaining poem* he had mentioned, and of which, for the pleaſure ſo fine a compoſition will give you, I here ſend your Lordſhip a copy. His ſpirits,

[*b*] A citation from one of his own poems.

he ſaid, were enlivened by the face of an old friend; and indeed I never knew his converſation more eaſy and chearful [c]; which yet I could not perfectly enjoy for the regret the ill ſucceſs of my negociation had given me.

I RETURNED to town in the evening, ruminating on what had paſſed, and reſolving to ſend your Lordſhip an exact account of our converſation. I particularly made a point of ſuppreſſing nothing which Mr. COWLEY had to ſay for himſelf in this debate, however it may ſometimes ſeem to make againſt me. The whole hath grown under my pen into a greater length than I expected. But your Lordſhip wiſhed to know the bottom of our friend's mind; and I thought you would ſee it more diſtinctly

[c] Mr. SPRAT himſelf tells us, ſpeaking of Mr. COWLEY's retreat, that "ſome few friends and books, a *chearful heart*, and innocent conſcience, were his conſtant companions." *Life.*

and

and clearly in this way, than in any other. I am, my Lord, with the moſt profound reſpect,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient

and faithful ſervant,

T. SPRAT.

THE

COMPLAINT[d].

IN a deep viſion's intellectual ſcene
Beneath a bower for ſorrow made,
Th' uncomfortable ſhade
Of the black yew's unlucky green,

[d] This is one of the prettieſt of Mr. COWLEY's ſmaller Poems. The plan of it is highly poetical: and, though the numbers be not the moſt pleaſing, the expreſſion is almoſt every where natural and beautiful. But it's principal charm is that air of

Mixt with the mourning willow's careful gray,
Where reverend CAM cuts out his famous way,
The melancholy COWLEY lay:
And lo! a Muſe appear'd to's cloſed ſight,
(The Muſes oft in lands of viſions play)
Bodied, array'd, and ſeen by an internal light:
A golden harp with ſilver ſtrings ſhe bore,
A wondrous hieroglyphic robe ſhe wore,
In which all colours, and all figures were,
That nature, or that fancy can create,
That art can never imitate;
And with looſe pride it wanton'd in the air.
In ſuch a dreſs, in ſuch a well-cloth'd dream,
She us'd of old, near fair ISMENUS' ſtream,
PINDAR her THEBAN favourite to meet;
A crown was on her head, and wings were on her feet.

II.

She touch'd him with her harp, and rais'd him from the ground;
The ſhaken ſtrings melodiouſly reſound.

melancholy, thrown over the whole, ſo expreſſive of the poet's character.

The *addreſs* of the writer is ſeen in conveying his juſt reproaches on the *Court*, under a pretended vindication of it againſt the *Muſe*.

Art

Art thou return'd at laſt, ſaid ſhe,
To this forſaken place and me?
Thou prodigal, who didſt ſo looſely waſte
Of all thy youthful years, the good eſtate?
Art thou return'd here to repent too late;
And gather huſks of learning up at laſt,
Now the rich harveſt-time of life is paſt,
And *Winter* marches on ſo faſt?
But when I meant t' adopt thee for my ſon,
And did as learn'd a portion thee aſſign,
As ever any of the mighty Nine
Had to her deareſt children done;
When I reſolv'd t' exalt thy anointed name,
Among the ſpiritual lords of peaceful fame [e];
Thou changeling, thou, bewitch'd with noiſe and ſhow,
Would'ſt into courts and cities from me go;
Would'ſt ſee the world abroad, and have a ſhare
In all the follies, and the tumults there.
Thou would'ſt, forſooth, be ſomething in a ſtate,
And buſineſs thou would'ſt find, and would'ſt create:

[e] An execrable line.

Buſineſs! the frivolous pretence
Of humane luſts to ſhake off innocence:
Buſineſs! the grave impertinence!
Buſineſs! the thing which I of all things hate:
Buſineſs! the contradiction of thy fate.

III.

Go, renegado, caſt up thy account,
And ſee to what amount
Thy fooliſh gains by quitting me:
The ſale of knowledge, fame, and liberty,
The fruits of thy unlearn'd apoſtaſy.
Thou thought'ſt, if once the public ſtorm were paſt,
All thy remaining life ſhould ſun-ſhine be:
Behold, the public ſtorm is ſpent at laſt,
The ſovereign is toſt at ſea no more,
And thou, with all the noble company,
Art got at laſt to ſhore.
But whilſt thy fellow voyagers, I ſee,
All march'd up to poſſeſs the promis'd land,
Thou ſtill alone (alas) doſt gaping ſtand
Upon the naked beach, upon the barren ſand.

IV. As

IV.

As a fair morning of the bleſſed ſpring,
After a tedious ſtormy night;
Such was the glorious entry of our king:
Enriching moiſture drop'd on every thing;
Plenty he ſow'd below, and caſt about him light.
But then (alas) to thee alone,
One of old GIDEON's miracles was ſhown;
For every tree, and every herb around,
With pearly dew was crown'd,
And upon all the quicken'd ground,
The fruitful ſeed of heaven did brooding lye,
And nothing but the Muſe's fleece was dry.
It did all other threats ſurpaſs
When God to his own people ſaid,
(The men, whom thro' long wanderings he had led)
That he would give them ev'n a heaven of braſs;
They look'd up to that heaven in vain,
That bounteous heaven, which God did not reſtrain,
Upon the moſt unjuſt to ſhine and rain.

V.

The RACHAEL, for which twice ſeven years
and more
Thou didſt with faith and labour ſerve,
And didſt (if faith and labour can) deſerve,
Though ſhe contracted was to thee,
Giv'n to another who had ſtore
Of fairer, and of richer wives before,
And not a *Leah* left, thy recompence to be.
Go on, twice ſeven years more thy fortune try,
Twice ſeven years more, God in his bounty
may
Give thee, to fling away
Into the court's deceitful lottery.
But think how likely 'tis that thou,
With the dull work of thy unwieldy plough,
Should'ſt in a hard and barren ſeaſon thrive,
Should even able be to live;
Thou, to whoſe ſhare ſo little bread did fall,
In the miraculous year, when MANNA rain'd
on all.

VI.

Thus ſpake the Muſe, and ſpake it with a ſmile,
That ſeem'd at once to pity and revile,
And

And to her thus, raiſing his thoughtful head,
The melancholy COWLEY ſaid:
Ah, wanton foe, doſt thou upbraid
The ills which thou thyſelf haſt made?
When, in the cradle, innocent I lay,
Thou, wicked ſpirit, ſtoleſt me away,
And my abuſed ſoul didſt bear
Into thy new-found worlds I know not where,
Thy golden *Indies* in the air;
And ever ſince I ſtrive in vain
My raviſhed freedom to regain:
Still I rebel, ſtill thou doſt reign,
Lo, ſtill in verſe againſt thee I complain.
There is a ſort of ſtubborn weeds,
Which, if the earth but once, it ever breeds;
No wholeſome herb can near them thrive,
No uſeful plant can keep alive;
The fooliſh ſports I did on thee beſtow,
Make all my art and labour fruitleſs now;
Where once ſuch Fairies dance, no graſs doth
ever grow.

VII.

When my new mind had no infuſion known,
Thou gav'ſt ſo deep a tincture of thine own,
That ever ſince I vainly try
To waſh away th' inherent dye:

Long

Long work perhaps may ſpoil thy colours quite,
But never will reduce the native white;
To all the ports of honour and of gain,
I often ſteer my courſe in vain,
Thy gale comes croſs, and drives me back again.
Thou ſlack'neſt all my nerves of induſtry,
By making them ſo oft to be
The tinkling ſtrings of thy looſe minſtrelſie.
Whoever this world's happineſs would ſee,
Muſt as entirely caſt off thee,
As they who only heaven deſire,
Do from the world retire.
This was my error, this my groſs miſtake,
Myſelf a demy-votary to make,
Thus with SAPPHIRA, and her huſband's fate,
(A fault which I like them am taught too late)
For all that I gave up, I nothing gain,
And periſh for the part which I retain.

VIII.

Teach me not then, O thou fallacious Muſe,
The court, and better king, t' accuſe;
The heaven under which I live is fair;
The fertile ſoil will a full harveſt bear;
Thine, thine is all the barrenneſs; if thou
Mak'ſt me ſit ſtill and ſing, when I ſhould
plough;

When

When I but think, how many a tedious year
Our patient sov'reign did attend
His long misfortunes fatal end;
How chearfully, and how exempt from fear,
On the Great Sovereign's will he did depend,
I ought to be accurst, if I refuse
To wait on his, O thou fallacious Muse!
Kings have long hands (they say) and though I be
So distant, they may reach at length to me.
However, of all princes, thou
Should'st not reproach rewards for being small or slow;
Thou, who rewardest but with popular breath,
And that too after death.

DIA-

DIALOGUE III.

On the Age of Queen ELIZABETH.

MR. DIGBY, DR. ARBUTHNOT, MR. ADDISON.

IT happened, in the ſummer of the year 1716, that Dr. ARBUTHNOT and Mr. ADDISON had occaſion to take a journey together into *Warwickſhire*. Mr. DIGBY, who had received intelligence of their motions and was then at *Coleſhill*, contrived to give them the meeting at *Warwick*; where they intended to paſs a day or two, in viſiting the curioſities of that fine town, and the more remarkable of thoſe remains of antiquity that are to be ſeen in its neighbourhood. Theſe were matter of high entertainment to all of them; to Dr. ARBUTHNOT, for the pleaſure of recollecting the antient times;

to

to Mr. ADDISON, on account of ſome political reflexions, he was fond of indulging on ſuch occaſions; and to Mr. DIGBY, from an ingenuous curioſity, and the love of ſeeing and obſerving whatever was moſt remarkable, whether in the paſt ages, or the preſent.

AMONGST other things that amuſed them, they were much taken with the great church at *Warwick*. They entertained themſelves with the ſeveral hiſtories, which it's many old monuments recalled to their memory [*f*]. The famous inſcription of Sir FULK GREVIL occaſioned ſome reflexions; eſpecially to Mr. DIGBY, who had uſed to be much affected with the fame and fortunes of the accompliſhed Sir PHILIP SYDNEY. The glory of the houſe of WARWICK was alſo, an ample field of meditation. But

[*f*] For the account of theſe *Monuments*, and of *Kenelworth-Caſtle*, ſee the plans and deſcriptions of DUGDALE.

what chanced to take their attention moſt, was the monument of the great earl of LEICESTER. It recorded his titles at full length, and was, beſides, richly decorated with ſculpture, diſplaying the various enſigns and trophies of his greatneſs. The pride of this miniſter had never appeared to them ſo conſpicuous, as in the legends and ornaments of his tomb-ſtone; which had not only outlived his family, but ſeemed to aſſure itſelf of immortality, by taking refuge, as it were, at the foot of the altar.

THESE funereal honours engaged them in ſome common reflexions on the folly of ſuch expedients to perpetuate human grandeur; but at the ſame time, as is the uſual effect of theſe things, ſtruck their imaginations very ſtrongly. They readily apprehended what muſt have been the ſtate of this mighty favourite in his life-time, from what they ſaw of it in this proud memorial, which continued in a manner

manner to inſult poſterity ſo many years after his death. But underſtanding that the fragments at leaſt of his ſupreme glory, when it was flouriſhing at its height, were ſtill to be ſeen at KENELWORTH, which they knew could be at no great diſtance, they reſolved to viſit them the next day, and indulge to the utmoſt the ſeveral reflexions which ſuch ſcenes are apt to inſpire. On inquiry, they found it was not more than five or ſix miles to the caſtle; ſo that, by ſtarting early in the morning, they might eaſily return to dinner at *Warwick*. They kept to their appointment ſo well, that they got to *Kenelworth* in good time, and had even two or three hours on their hands to ſpend, in taking an exact view of the place.

IT was luckily one of thoſe fine days, which our travellers would moſt have wiſhed for, and which indeed are moſt agreeable in this ſeaſon. It was clear enough

enough to afford a diſtinct proſpect of the country, and to ſet the objects, they wanted to take a view of, in a good light; and yet was ſo conveniently clouded as to check the heat of the ſun, and make the exerciſe of walking, of which they were likely to have a good deal, perfectly eaſy to them.

When they alighted from the coach, the firſt object that preſented itſelf, was the principal GATEWAY of the Caſtle. It had been converted into a farm-houſe, and was indeed the only part of theſe vaſt ruins, that was inhabited. On their entrance into the *inner-court*, they were ſtruck with the ſight of many mouldring towers, which preſerved a ſort of magnificence even in their ruins. They amuſed themſelves with obſerving the vaſt compaſs of the whole, with marking the uſes, and tracing the dimenſions, of the ſeveral parts. All which it was eaſy for them to do, by the very diſtinct traces

that remained of them, and eſpecially by means of DUGDALE's plans and deſcriptions, which they had taken care to conſult.

AFTER rambling about for ſome time, they clambered up a heap of ruins, which lay on the weſt ſide the court: and thence came to a broken tower, which, when they had mounted ſome ſteps, let them out into a path-way on the tops of the walls. From this eminence they had a very diſtinct view of the ſeveral parts they had before contemplated; of the *gardens* on the north-ſide; of the *winding meadow* that encompaſſed the walls of the caſtle, on the weſt and ſouth; and had, beſides, the command of the country round about them for many miles. The proſpect of ſo many antique towers falling into rubbiſh, contraſted to the various beauties of the landſkape, ſtruck them with admiration, and kept them ſilent for ſome time.

AT length recovering himſelf, I perceive, ſaid Dr. ARBUTHNOT, we are all of

of us not a little affected with the ſight of theſe ruins. They even create a melancholy in me; and yet a melancholy of ſo delightful a kind, that I would not exchange it, methinks, for any briſker ſenſation. The experience of this effect hath often led me to inquire, how it is that the mind, even while it laments, finds ſo great a pleaſure in viſiting theſe ſcenes of deſolation. Is it, continued he, from the pure love of antiquity, and the amuſing train of reflexions into which ſuch remains of ancient magnificence naturally lead us?

I KNOW not, returned Mr. ADDISON, what pain it may give you to contemplate theſe triumphs of time and fortune. For my part, I am not ſenſible of the mixt ſenſation you ſpeak of. I feel a pleaſure indeed; but it is ſincere, and, as I conceive, may be eaſily accounted for. 'Tis nothing more, I believe, than a fiction of the imagination, which makes me think I am taking a revenge on the once proſper-

ous and overſhadowing height, PRÆUMBRANS FASTIGIUM, as ſomebody expreſſes it, of inordinate Greatneſs. It is certain, continued he, this theatre of a great ſtateſman's pride, the delight of many of our princes, and which boaſts of having given entertainment to one of them in a manner ſo ſplendid, as to claim a remembrance, even in the annals of our country, would now, in its preſent ſtate, adminiſter ample matter for much inſulting reflexion.

"WHERE, one might aſk, are the tilts and tournaments, the princely ſhews and ſports, which were once ſo proudly celebrated within theſe walls? where are the pageants, the ſtudied devices and emblems of curious invention, that ſet the court at a gaze, and even tranſported the high ſoul of our ELIZABETH? Where now, purſued he, (pointing to that which was formerly a canal, but at preſent is only a meadow with a ſmall rivulet running through it) where is the floating iſland,

iſland, the blaze of torches that eclipſed the day, the lady of the lake, the ſilken nymphs her attendants, with all the other fantaſtic exhibitions ſurpaſſing even the whimſies of the wildeſt romance? What now is become of the revelry of feaſting? of the minſtrelſy, that took the ear ſo delightfully as it babbled along the valley, or floated on the ſurface of this lake? See there the ſmokeleſs kitchens, ſtretching to a length that might give room for the ſacrifice of a hecatomb; the vaulted hall, which mirth and jollity have ſet ſo often in an uproar; the rooms of ſtate, and the preſence-chamber: what are they now but void and tenantleſs ruins, claſped with ivy, open to wind and weather, and preſenting to the eye nothing but the ribs and carcaſe, as it were, of their former ſtate? And ſee, ſaid he, that proud gate-way, once the manſion of a ſurly porter [g], who, partaking of the

[g] The ſpeaker's idea of Lord LEICESTER's porter agrees with the character he ſuſtained on the

pride of his lord, made the crouds wait, and refuſed admittance, perhaps, to nobles whom fear or intereſt drew to theſe walls, to pay their homage to their maſter: ſee it now the reſidence of a poor tenant, who turns the key but to let himſelf out to his daily labour, to admit him to a ſhort meal, and ſecure his night-

queen's reception at *Kenelworth*; as we find it deſcribed in a paper of good authority written at that time. "Here a PORTER, tall of perſon, big of limbs, ſtark of countenance—with club and keys of quantity according; in a rough ſpeech, full of paſſion in metre, while the queen came within his ward, burſt out in a great pang of impatience to ſee ſuch uncouth trudging to and fro, ſuch riding in and out, with ſuch din and noiſe of talk, within his charge; whereof he never ſaw the like, nor had any warning once, ne yet could make to himſelf any cauſe of the matter. At laſt, upon better view and advertiſement, he proclaims open gates and free paſſage to all; yields over his club, his keys, his office and all, and on his knees humbly prays pardon of his ignorance and impatience. Which her highneſs graciouſly granting, &c."—

A letter from an attendant in court to his friend a citizen and merchant of *London*. From the court, at *Worceſter*, 20 *Aug.* 1575.

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ly ſlumbers. Yet, in this humble ſtate, it hath had the fortune to outlive the glory of the reſt, and hath even drawn to itſelf the whole of that little note and credit, which time hath continued to this once pompous building. For, while the caſtle itſelf is crumbled into ſhapeleſs ruins, and is prophaned, as we there ſee, by the vileſt uſes, this outwork of greatneſs is left entire, ſheltered and cloſed in from bird and beaſt, and even affords ſome decent room in which the *human face divine* is not aſhamed to ſhew itſelf."

WHILE Mr. ADDISON went on in this vein, his two friends ſtood looking on each other; as not conceiving what might be the cauſe of his expreſſing himſelf with a vehemence, ſo uncommon, and not ſuited to his natural temper. When the fit was over, I confeſs, ſaid Dr. ARBUTHNOT, this is no bad topic for a moraliſt to declaim upon. And, though it be a trite one, we know how capable it is of being

adorned by him who, on a late occaſion, could meditate ſo finely on the TOMBS AT WESTMINSTER [*b*]. But ſurely, proceeded he, you warm yourſelf in this contemplation, beyond what the ſubject requires of you. The vanity of human greatneſs is ſeen in ſo many inſtances, that I wonder to hear you harangue on this with ſo peculiar an exultation. There is no travelling ten miles together in any part of the kingdom without ſtumbling on ſome ruin, which, though perhaps not ſo conſiderable as this before us, would furniſh occaſion, however, for the ſame reflexions. There would be no end of moralizing over every broken tower, or ſhattered fabric, which calls to mind the ſhort-lived glories of our anceſtors.

TRUE, ſaid Mr. ADDISON; and, if the ſhort continuance of theſe glories were the only circumſtance, I might well have ſpared the exultation, you ſpeak of, in

[*b*] In the firſt volume of the SPECTATOR.

this

this triumph over the ſhattered remnants of *Kenelworth*. But there is ſomething elſe that fires me on the occaſion. It brings to mind the fraud, the rapine, the inſolence, of the potent miniſter, who vainly thought to immortalize his ill-gotten glory by this proud monument. Nay, further, it awakens an indignation againſt the proſperous tyranny of thoſe wretched times, and creates a generous pleaſure in reflecting on the happineſs we enjoy under a juſter and more equal government. Believe me, I never ſee the remains of that greatneſs which aroſe in the paſt ages on the ruins of public freedom and private property, but I congratulate with myſelf on living at a time, when the meaneſt ſubject is as free and independent as thoſe royal minions; and when his property, whatever it be, is as ſecure from oppreſſion, as that of the firſt miniſter. And I own this congratulation is not the leſs ſincere for conſidering that the inſtance before us is

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taken from the reign of the virgin queen, which it hath been the faſhion to cry up above that of any other of our princes [*i*]. I deſire no other confutation of ſo ſtrange unthankful a preference, than the ſight of this vaſt caſtle, together with the recollection of thoſe means by which its maſter arrived at his enormous greatneſs.

YOUR indignation then, replied Dr. ARBUTHNOT, is not ſo much of the moral, as *political* kind [*k*]. But is not the concluſion a little too haſty, when, from

[*i*] The factious uſe, that was afterwards made of this humour of magnifying the character of ELIZABETH, may be ſeen in the *Craftſman*, and *Remarks on the Hiſtory of England*.

[*k*] What the *political* character of Mr. ADDISON was, may be ſeen from his *Whig-examiner*. This amiable man was keen and even cauſtic on ſubjects, where his party, that is, *civil liberty*, was concerned. Nor let it be any objection to the character I make him ſuſtain in this Dialogue, that he treats ELIZABETH's government with reſpect in the *Free-holder*. He had then the people to cajole, who were taught to reverence her memory. He is, here, addreſſing himſelf, in private, to his friends.

the inſtance of one over-grown favourite, you infer the general infelicity of the time, in which he flouriſhed? I am not, I aſſure you, one of thoſe unthankful men who forget the bleſſings they enjoy under a prince of more juſtice and moderation than queen ELIZABETH, and under a better conſtitution of government than prevailed in the days of our forefathers. Yet, ſetting aſide ſome particular diſhonours of that reign (of which, let the tyranny of *Leiceſter*, if you will, be one), I ſee not but the acknowledged virtues of that princeſs, and the wiſdom of her government, may be a proper foundation for all the honours, that poſterity have ever paid to her.

WERE I even diſpoſed to agree with you, returned Mr. ADDISON, I ſhould not have the leſs reaſon for triumphing, as I do, on the preſent ſtate of our government. For, if ſuch abuſes could creep in, and be ſuffered for ſo many years

years under ſo great a princeſs, what was there not to fear (as what, indeed, did not the ſubject actually feel) under ſome of her ſucceſſors? But, to ſpeak my mind frankly, I ſee no ſufficient grounds for the exceſſive prejudice, that hath ſomehow taken place, in favour of the GOLDEN REIGN, as it is called, OF ELIZABETH. I find neither the wiſdom, nor the virtue in it, that can entitle it to a preference before all other ages.

ON the contrary, ſaid Dr. ARBUTHNOT, I never contemplate the monuments of that time, without a ſilent admiration of the virtues that adorned it. Heroes and ſages croud in upon my memory. Nay, the very people were of a character above what we are acquainted with in our days. I could almoſt fancy, the ſoil itſelf wore another face, and, as you poets imagine on ſome occaſions, that our anceſtors lived under a brighter ſun and happier climate than we can boaſt of.

To be ſure! ſaid Mr. ADDISON ſmiling: or, why not affirm, in the proper language of romance, that the women of thoſe days were all chaſte, and the men valiant? But cannot you ſuſpect at leaſt that there is ſome inchantment in the caſe, and that your love of antiquity may poſſibly operate in more inſtances than thoſe of your favourite *Greeks* and *Romans?* Tell me honeſtly, purſued he, hath not this diſtance of a century and half a little impoſed upon you? Do not theſe broken towers, which moved you juſt now to ſo compaſſionate a lamentation over them, diſpoſe you to a greater fondneſs for the times, in which they aroſe, than can be fairly juſtified?

I WILL not deny, returned Dr. ARBUTHNOT, but we are often very generous to the paſt times, and unjuſt enough to the preſent. But I think there is little of this illuſion in the caſe before us. And,

And, ſince you call my attention to theſe noble ruins, let me own to you, that they do indeed excite in me a veneration for the times, of which they preſent ſo ſtriking a memorial. But ſurely not without reaſon. For there is ſcarce an object in view, that doth not revive the memory of ſome diſtinguiſhing character of that age, which may juſtify ſuch veneration.

ALAS! interrupted Mr. ADDISON, and what can theſe objects call to mind but the memory of barbarous manners and a deſpotic government?

FOR the *government*, replied Dr. ARBUTHNOT, I do not well conceive how any concluſion about that can be drawn from this fabric. The MANNERS I was thinking of; and I ſee them ſtrongly expreſſed in many parts of it. But whether barbarous or not, I could almoſt take upon me to diſpute with you. And why,

why, indeed, ſince you allowed yourſelf to declaim on the vices, ſo apparent, as you ſuppoſe, in this monument of antiquity, may not I have leave to conſider it in another point of view, and preſent to you the virtues which, to my eye at leaſt, are full as diſcernible?

You cannot, continued he, turn your eyes on any part of theſe ruins, without encountering ſome memorial of the virtue, induſtry, or ingenuity, of our anceſtors.

Look there, ſaid he, on that fine room (pointing to the HALL, that lay juſt beneath them); and tell me if you can help reſpecting the HOSPITALITY which ſo much diſtinguiſhed the palaces of the great in thoſe ſimpler ages. You gave an invidious turn to this circumſtance, when you choſe to conſider it only in the light of waſteful expence and prodigality. But no virtue is privileged from an ill name. And, on ſecond thoughts, I perſuade

perſuade myſelf, it will appear you have injured this, by ſo uncandid an appellation. Can it deſerve this cenſure, that the lord of this princely caſtle threw open his doors and ſpread his table for the reception of his friends, his followers, and even for the royal entertainment of his ſovereign? Is any expence more proper than that which tends to conciliate [*l*] friendſhips, ſpread the intereſts of ſociety, and knit mankind together by a generous communication in theſe advantages of wealth and fortune? The arts of a refined ſequeſtered luxury were then unknown. The ſame bell, that called the great man to his table, invited the neighbourhood all around, and proclaimed a holiday to the whole country [*m*]. Who does not feel the deco-

[*l*] LUCIAN expreſſes this uſe of the Table, prettily — ΦΙΛΙΑΣ ΜΕΣΙΤΗΝ ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑΝ. Ἔρωτες, c. 27.

[*m*] Beſides this ſort of hoſpitality, there was another ſtill more noble and diſintereſted, which diſtinguiſhed the early times, eſpecially the purer

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num, and underſtand the benefits of this magnificence? The pre-eminence of rank and fortune was nobly ſuſtained: the ſubordination of ſociety preſerved: and yet the envy that is ſo apt to attend the great, happily avoided. Hence the weight and influence of the old nobility, who engaged the love, as well as commanded the veneration, of the people. In the mean time, rural induſtry flouriſhed: private luxury was diſcouraged: and in both ways that frugal ſimplicity of life, our country's grace and

ages of chivalry. It was cuſtomary, it ſeems, for the great lords to fix up HELMETS on the roofs and battlements of their caſtles as a ſignal of hoſpitality to all adventurers and noble paſſengers. "Adoncques etoit une couſtume en la Grant Bretagne (ſays the author of the old romance, called PERCEFOREST) et fut tant que charité regna illecque, tous gentils hommes et nôbles dames faiſoient mettre au plus hault de leur hoſtel ung heaulme, en SIGNE que tous gentils hommes et gentilles femmes treſpaſſans les chemins, entraſſent hardyement en leur hoſtel comme en leur propre; car leurs biens eſtoient davantage à tous nobles hommes et femmes treſpaſſans le royaulme." Vol. iii. f. 103.

ornament in thoſe days, was preſerved and promoted.

IT would ſpoil your panegyric, I doubt, ſaid Mr. ADDISON, to obſerve the factious uſe, that was made of this magnificence, and the tendency it had to ſupport the pride and inſolence of the old nobility. The intereſt of the great, I am afraid, was but another name for the ſlavery of the people [*n*].

[*n*] This is not ſaid without authority: "Give "me leave, ſays one, to hold this paradox, that the "Engliſh were never more idle, never more ignorant "in manual arts, never more factious in following "the parties of princes or their landlords, never "more baſe (as I may ſay) trencher-ſlaves, than in "that age, wherein great men kept open houſes for "all comers and goers; and that in our age, "wherein we have better learned each man to live "of his own, and great men keep not ſuch troops "of idle ſervants, not only the Engliſh are become "very induſtrious and ſkilful in manual arts, but alſo "the tyranny of lords and gentlemen is abated, "whereby they nouriſhed private diſſenſions and "civil wars, with the deſtruction of the common "people." FYNES MORYSON's *Itinerary*, Part III. Ch. v.

I SEE

I saw it, Dr. ARBUTHNOT said, in a different light; and so did our princes themselves, who could not but be well acquainted with the proper effects of that interest. They considered the weight of the nobility, as a counterpoise to their own sovereignty. It was on this account they had used all means to lessen their influence. But the consequence was beside their expectation. The authority of the crown fell with it: and, which was still less expected by political men, the liberty of the people, after it had wantoned for a time, sunk under the general oppression. It was then discovered, but a little of the latest, that public freedom throve best, when it wound itself about the stock of the antient nobility. In truth, it was the defect, not the excess, of patrician influence, that made way for the miseries of the next century.

You ſee then it is not without cauſe that I lay a ſtreſs, even in a political view, on this popular hoſpitality of the great in the former ages [o].

But, leſt you think I ſit too long at the table, let us go on to the TILTYARD, which lies juſt before us; that ſchool of fortitude and honour to our generous forefathers. A younger fancy, than mine, would be apt to kindle at the ſight. And our ſprightlier friend here, I dare

[o] Dr. ARBUTHNOT, too, has his authority. A famous politician of the laſt century expreſſeth himſelf to much the ſame purpoſe, after his manner: "Henceforth, ſays he [that is, after the ſtatutes againſt retainers in HEN. VII's reign] the country lives, and *great tables* of the nobility, which no longer nouriſhed veins that would bleed for them, were fruitleſs and loathſome till they changed the air, and of princes became *courtiers*; where their revenues, never to have been exhauſted by beef and mutton, were found *narrow*; whence followed racking of rents, and, at length, ſale of lands." SIR JAMES HARRINGTON'S OCEANA, p. 40, *Lond.* 1656.

ſay,

ſay, has already taken fire at the remembrance of the gallant exerciſes, which were celebrated in that quarter.

Mr. Digby owned, he had a ſecret veneration for the manly games of that time, which he had ſeen ſo triumphantly ſet forth in the old poets and romancers.

Right, ſaid Mr. Addison; it is preciſely in that circumſtance that the enchantment conſiſts. Some of our beſt wits have taken a deal of idle pains to ennoble a very barbarous entertainment, and recommend it to us under the ſpecious name of gallantry and honour. But Mr. Digby ſees through the cheat. Not that I doubt, continued he, but the doctor, now he is in the vein of panegyric, will lay a mighty ſtreſs on theſe barbarities; and perhaps compare them with the exerciſes in the *Roman* Circus, or the *Olympic* Barriers.

AND why not? interrupted Dr. ARBUTHNOT. The tendency of all three was the ſame; to invigorate the faculties both of mind and body; to give ſtrength, grace, and dexterity, to the limbs; and fire the mind with a generous emulation of the manly and martial virtues.

WHY truly, ſaid Mr. ADDISON, I ſhall not deny that all *three*, as you obſerve, were much of the ſame merit. And, now your hand is in for this ſort of encomium, do not forget to celebrate the ſublime taſte of our forefathers for *bear-baiting* [*p*], as well as *tilting*; and tell

[*p*] True it is, that this diverſiſement of *bear-baiting* was not altogether unknown in the age of ELIZABETH, and, as it ſeemeth, not much miſliked of maſter STOW himſelf, who hath very graphically deſcribed it. He is ſpeaking of the *Daniſh* embaſſador's reception and entertainment at *Greenwich* in 1586. "As the better ſort, ſaith he, had their convenient diſports, ſo were not the ordinary people excluded from competent pleaſure. For, upon a green, very ſpacious and large, where thouſands

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us too, how gloriously the mob of those days, as well as their betters, used to belabour one another.

I CONFESS, said Dr. ARBUTHNOT, the softness of our manners makes it difficult

might stand and behold with good contentment, there BEAR-BAITING and bull-baiting (tempered with other merry disports) were exhibited; whereat it cannot be spoken of what pleasure the people took.

For it was a sport alone, of these beasts, continueth the historian, to see the bear with his pink eyes leering after his enemies; the nimbleness and wait of the dog to take his advantage; and the force and experience of the bear again to avoid the assaults: if he were bitten in one place, how he would pinch in another to get free; and if he were once taken, then what shift with biting, clawing, roring, tugging, grasping, tumbling, and tossing, he would work to wind himself away; and, when he was loose, to shake his ears with the blood and slaver about his phisnomy, was a pittance of good relief. The like pastime also of the bull.—And now the day being far spent, and the sun in his declination, the embassador withdrew to his lodging by barge to CROSBY'S place; where, no doubt, THIS DAY'S SOLEMNITY WAS THOUGHT UPON AND TALKED OF." p. 1562.

to ſpeak on this ſubject without incurring the ridicule, you appear ſo willing to employ againſt me. But you muſt not think to diſcredit theſe gymnaſtics by a little raillery, which has its foundation only in modern prejudices. For it is no ſecret, that the graveſt and politeſt men of antiquity were of my mind. You will hardly ſuſpect PLATO of incivility, either in his notions or manners. And need I remind you how much he inſiſts on the gymnaſtic diſcipline; without which he could not have formed, or at leaſt have ſupported, his republic?

IT was upon this principle, I ſuppoſe then, ſaid Mr. DIGBY, or perhaps in imitation of his *Græcian* maſter, that our MILTON laid ſo great a ſtreſs on this diſcipline in his TRACTATE OF EDUCATION. And before him, in the very time you ſpeak of, ASCHAM, I obſerve, took no ſmall pains to much the ſame purpoſe, in his TOXOPHILUS.

IT is very clear, reſumed Dr. ARBUTHNOT, from theſe inſtances, and many more that might be given, that the ancients were not ſingular in their notions on this ſubject. But, ſince you have drawn me into a grave defence of theſe exerciſes, let me further own to you that I think the *Gothic* Tilts and Tournaments exceeded, both in uſe and elegance, even the *Græcian* gymnaſtics [*q*]. They were a more direct image of war, than any of the games at *Olympia*. And if *Xenophon* could be ſo laviſh in his praiſes on the *Perſian* practice of hunting, becauſe it had ſome reſemblance to the exerciſe of arms, what would he not have ſaid of an inſtitution, which has all the forms of a real combat?

BUT there was an elegance, too, in the conduct of the tournament, that might reconcile it even to modern delicacy. For,

[*q*] See the *Anacharſis* of LUCIAN.

beſides

beſides the ſplendor of the ſhew; the dexterity, with which theſe exerciſes were performed; and the fancy, that appeared in their accoutrement, dreſſes, and devices: the whole conteſt was ennobled with an air of gallantry, that muſt have had a great effect in refining the manners of the combatants. And yet this gallantry had no ill influence on morals; for, as you inſulted me juſt now, it was the odd humour of thoſe days for the women to pride themſelves in their chaſtity [r], as well as the men in their valour.

[r] If the reader be complaiſant enough to admit the fact, it may be accounted for, on the ideas of chivalry, in the following manner. The knight forfeited all pretenſions to the favour of the ladies, if he failed, in any degree, in the point of valour. And, reciprocally, the claim which the ladies had to protection and courteſy from the order of knights, was founded ſingly in the reputation of chaſtity, which was the female point of honour. "Ce droit que les dames avoient ſur la chevalerie (ſays M. DE LA CURNE DE STE. PALAYE) devoit être conditionel: il ſuppoſoit que leur conduite et leur reputa-

IN

In ſhort, I conſider the *Tournay*, as the beſt ſchool of civility as well as heroiſm. "High-erected thoughts, ſeated in a heart of courteſy," as an old writer [5] well expreſſes it, was the proper character of ſuch as had been trained in this diſcipline.

No wonder then, purſued he, the poets and romance-writers took ſo much pains to immortalize theſe trials of manhood. It was but what PINDAR and HOMER himſelf, thoſe antient maſters of romance, had done before them. And

dion ne les rendoient point indignes de l'eſpece d'aſſociation qui les uniſſoit à cet orde uniquement fondé ſur l'honneur.

Par celle voye (ſays an old *French* writer, the chevalier DE LA TOUR, about the year 1371) les bonnes ſe craignoient et ſe tenoient plus fermes de faire choſe dont elles peuſſent perdre leur honneur et leur etat. *Si vouldroye que celui temps fuſt revenu, car je penſe qu'il n'en ſeroit pas tant de blaſmées comme il eſt à preſent.*

[5] Sir PHILIP SYDNEY.

how

how could it be otherwiſe? The ſhew itſelf, as I ſaid, had ſomething very taking in it; whilſt every graceful attitude of perſon, with every generous movement of the mind, afforded the fineſt materials for deſcription. And I am even ready to believe that what we hear cenſured in their writings, as falſe, incredible, and fantaſtic, was frequently but a juſt copy of life, and that there was more of truth and reality [*t*] in their repreſentations, than we are apt to imagine. Their notions of honour and gallantry were carried to an elevation [*u*], which, in theſe

[*t*] What is hinted, here, of the *reality* of theſe repreſentations, hath been lately ſhewn at large in a learned memoir on this ſubject, which the reader will find in the xx^th^ Tom. of HIST. DE L'ACAD. DES INSCRIPTIONS ET BELLES LETTRES.

[*u*] This repreſentation of things in the ages of chivalry agrees with what we are told by the author of the memoir, juſt quoted: "Les premières leçons," (ſays he, ſpeaking of the manner in which the youth were educated in the houſes of the Great, which were properly the ſchools of thoſe times) "qu'on leur donnoit, regardoient princi-

degenerate

degenerate days, hurts the credit of their ſtory; juſt as I have met with men that

palement *l'amour de Dieu, et des dames*, c'eſt-à-dire, la religion, et la galanterie. Mais autant la dévotion qu'on leur inſpiroit étoit accompagnée de puerilités et de ſuperſtitions, autant l'amour des dames, qu'on leur recommandoit, êtoit il rempli de RAFFINEMENT et de FANATISME. Il ſemble qu'on ne pouvoit, dans ces ſiêcles ignorans et groſſiers, préſenter aux hommes la religion ſous une forme aſſez materielle pour la mettre à leur portée; ni leur donner, en même tems, une idée de l'amour aſſez pure, aſſez metaphyſique, pour prevenir les deſordres et les excès, dont etoit capable une nation qui conſervoit par-tout le caractere impetueux qu'elle montroit à la guerre." Tom. xx. p. 600.

One ſees then the origin of that furious gallantry which runs through the old romances. And ſo long as the *refinement and fanaticiſm*, which the writer ſpeaks of, were kept in full vigour by the force of inſtitution and the faſhion of the times, the morals of theſe enamoured knights might, for any thing I know, be as pure as their apologiſt repreſents them. At the ſame time it muſt be confeſſed that this diſcipline was of a nature very likely to relax itſelf under another ſtate of things, and certainly to be miſconſtrued by thoſe who ſhould come to look upon theſe pictures of a *refined and ſpiritual paſſion*, as incredible and fantaſtic. And hence, no doubt, we are to account for that cenſure which a famous wri-

have

have doubted whether the virtues of the REGULI and the SCIPIOS of antient fame were not the offspring of pure fancy.

ter, and one of the ornaments of ELIZABETH's own age, paſſeth on the old books of chivalry. His expreſſion is downright, and ſomewhat coarſe. "In our fathers time nothing was red but books of chivalry, wherein a man, by reading, ſhould be led to none other end, but only to *manſlaughter* and *bawdry*. If any man ſuppoſe they were good enough to paſs the time withall, he is deceived. For ſurely vain words do work no ſmall thing in vain, ignorant, and young minds, eſpecially if they be given any thing thereunto of their own nature." He adds, like a good Proteſtant, "Theſe books, as I have heard ſay, were made the moſt part in abbayes and monaſteries; a very likely and fit fruit of ſuch an idle and blind kind of living." *Præf. to* ASCHAM's TOXOPHILUS, 1571.

I thought it but juſt to ſet down this cenſure of Mr. ASCHAM over-againſt the candid repreſentation of the French memorialiſt.—However, what is ſaid of the influence, which this ancient inſtitution had on the character of his countrymen, is not to be diſputed. "Les preceptes d'amour repandoient dans le commerce des dames ces conſiderations et ces egards reſpectueux, qui, n'ayant jamais été effacés de l'eſprit des François, ont toujours fait un des caracteres diſtinctifs de nôtre nation."

NAY now, Dr. ARBUTHNOT, ſaid Mr. ADDISON, you grow quite extravagant. What you, who are uſed to be ſo quick at eſpying all abuſes in ſcience, and defects in good taſte, turn advocate for theſe fopperies! Mr. DIGBY and I ſhall begin to think you banter us, in this apology for the antient gymnaſtics, and are only preparing a chapter for the facetious memoirs [*w*], you ſometimes promiſe us.

NEVER more in earneſt, I aſſure you, replied the doctor. I know what you have to object to theſe pictures of life and manners. But, if they will not bear examining as copies, they may deſerve to be imitated as models. And their uſe, methinks, might atone for ſome defects in the article of probability.

[*w*] Of SCRIBLERUS. See the vi^th^ chapter of that learned work, *On the antient Gymnaſtics.*

FOR

For my part, I conſider the legends of antient chivalry in a very ſerious light,

As *niches*, fill'd with ſtatues, to invite
Young valours forth—[x]

as BEN JOHNSON, a valorous hardy poet, and who, himſelf, would have made a good knight-errant, juſtly ſays of them. For, it is certain, they had this effect. The youth, in general, were fired with the love of martial exerciſes. They were early formed to habits of fatigue and enterprize. And, together with this warlike ſpirit, the profeſſion of chivalry was favourable to every other virtue. Affability, courteſy, generoſity, veracity, theſe were the qualifications moſt pretended to by the men of arms, in the days of pure and uncorrupted chivalry. We do not perhaps, ourſelves, know, at this diſtance of time, how much we are indebted to the force of this ſingular in-

[x] MASQUES, p. 181. WHALLEY's edition.

ſtitution

ſtitution. But this I may preſume to ſay, that the men, among whom it aroſe and flouriſhed moſt, had prodigious obligations to it. No policy, even of an ancient legiſlator, could have contrived a better expedient to cultivate the manners and tame the ſpirits of a rude and ignorant people. I could almoſt fancy it providentially introduced among the northern nations, to break the fierceneſs of their natures, and prevent that brutal ſavageneſs and ferocity of character, which muſt otherwiſe have grown upon them in the darker ages.

NAY, the generous ſentiments, it inſpired, perhaps contributed very much to awaken an emulation of a different kind; and to bring on thoſe days of light and knowledge which have diſpoſed us, ſomewhat unthankfully, to vilify and defame it. This is certain, that the firſt eſſays of wit and poetry, thoſe harbingers of returning day to every ſpecies of

good letters, were made in the boſom of chivalry, and amidſt the aſſemblies of noble dames, and courteous knights. And we may even obſerve, that the beſt of our modern princes, ſuch as have been moſt admired for their perſonal virtues, and have been moſt concerned in reſtoring all the arts of civility and politeneſs, have been paſſionately addicted to the feats of ancient proweſs. In the number of theſe, need I remind you of the courts of FRANCIS I, and HENRY IV, to ſay nothing of our own EDWARDS and HENRYS, and that mirrour of all their virtues in one, our renowned and almoſt romantic ELIZABETH [*y*]?

[*y*] This romantic ſpirit of the Queen may be ſeen as well in her *amours*, as military atchievements. "Ambiri, coli ob formam, et AMORIBUS, etiam inclinatâ jam ætate, videri voluit; de FABULOSIS INSULIS per illam relaxationem renovatâ quaſi memoriâ in quibus EQUITES AC STRENUI HOMINES ERRABANT, et AMORES, fœditate omni prohibitâ, generosè per VIRTUTEM exercebant." THUANI Hiſt. tom. vi. p. 172.

BUT

But you think I puſh the argument too far. And leſs than this may diſpoſe

The obſervation of the great hiſtorian is confirmed by FRANCIS OSBORNE, Eſq. who, ſpeaking of a contrivance of the *Ceciliun* party to ruin the earl of ESSEX, by giving him a rival in the good graces of the queen, obſerves—"But the whole reſult concluding in a duel, did rather inflame than abate the former account ſhe made of him: the opinion of a CHAMPION being more ſplendid (in the weak and romantic ſenſe of women, that admit of nothing fit to be made the object of a quarrel but themſelves) and far above that of a captain or general. So as Sir EDMUND CARY, brother to the Lord HUNSDEN, then chamberlain and near kinſman to the Queen, told me, that, though ſhe chid them both, nothing pleaſed her better than a conceit ſhe had, that her *beauty* was the ſubject of this quarrel, when, God knows, it grew from the ſtock of honour, of which then they were very tender."—MEM. OF Q. ELIZABETH, p. 456.

But nothing ſhews the romantic diſpoſition of the Queen, and indeed of her times, more evidently than the TRIUMPH, as it was called; deviſed and performed with great ſolemnity, in honour of the *French* commiſſioners in 1581. The contrivance was for four of her principal courtiers, under the quaint appellation of "four foſter-children of DESIRE," to beſiege and carry by dint of arms, "THE FORTRESS OF BEAUTY; intending, by this courtly

you to conceive with reverence of the ſcene before us, which muſt ever be regarded as a nurſery of brave men, a very ſeed-plot of warriors and heroes. I conſider the ſucceſſes at the barriers, as preludes to future conqueſts in the field. And, as whimſical a figure as a young tilter may make in your eye, who will ſay that the virtue was not formed here, that triumphed at AXELL and bled at ZUTPHEN?

enigma, nothing leſs than the queen's majeſty's own perſon.—The actors in this famous triumph, were, the Earl of ARUNDEL, the Lord WINDSOR, Maſter PHILIP SIDNEY, and Maſter FULK GREVIL." And the whole was conducted ſo entirely in the ſpirit and language of knight-errantry, that nothing in the Arcadia itſelf is more romantic. See the account at large in STOW's continuation of HOLINGSHEAD's Chronicles, p. 1316—1321.

To ſee the drift and propriety of this triumph, it is to be obſerved that the buſineſs which brought the *French* commiſſioners into *England*, was, the great affair of the queen's marriage with the duke of ALANÇON.

We ſhall very readily, replied Mr. Addison, acknowledge the bravery and other virtues of the young hero, whoſe fortunes you hint at. He was, in truth, to ſpeak the language of that time, the very flower of knighthood, and contributed more than any body elſe, by his pen, as well as ſword, to throw a luſtre on the profeſſion of chivalry. But the thing itſelf, however adorned by his wit and recommended by his manners, was barbarous; the offspring of *Gothic* fierceneſs; and ſhews the times, which favoured it ſo much, to have ſcarcely emerged from their original rudeneſs and brutality. You may celebrate, as loudly as you pleaſe, the deeds of theſe wonder-working knights. Alas, what affinity have ſuch prodigies to our life and manners? The old poet, you quoted juſt now with approbation, ſhall tell us the difference:

These were bold stories of our *Arthur's* age:
But here are other acts, another stage
And scene appears; it is not since as then;
No giants, dwarfs, or monsters here, but
MEN [z].

OR, if you want a higher authority, we should not, methinks, on such an occasion, forget the admiral CERVANTES, whose ridicule hath brought eternal dishonour on the profession of knight-errantry.

WITH your leave, interrupted Dr. ARBUTHNOT, I have reason to except against both your authorities. At best, they do but condemn the *abuses* of chivalry, and the madness of continuing the old romantic spirit in times when, from a change of manners and policy, it was no longer in season. Adventures, we will say, were of course to cease, when giants and monsters disappeared. And yet have they totally disappeared, and have giants

[z] Speeches at Prince HENRY's barriers.

and

and monſters been no where heard of out of the caſtles and foreſts of our old romancers? 'Tis odds, methinks, but, in the ſenſe of ELIZABETH's good ſubjects, PHILIP II. might be a *giant* at leaſt: and, without a little of this adventurous ſpirit, it may be a queſtion whether all her enchanters, I mean her BURLEIGHS and WALSINGHAMS, would have proved a match for him. I mention this the rather to ſhew you, how little obligation his countrymen have to your CERVANTES for laughing away the remains of that proweſs, which was the beſt ſupport of the *Spaniſh* monarchy.

As if, ſaid Mr. ADDISON, the proweſs of any people were only to be kept alive by their running mad. But let the caſe of the *Spaniards* be what it will, ſurely we, of this country, have little obligation to the ſpirit of chivalry, if it were only that it produced, or encouraged at leaſt, and hath now entailed upon us, the curſe

of duelling; which even yet domineers in the fashionable world, in spite of all that wit, and reason, and religion itself, have done to subdue it. 'Tis true, at present this law of arms is appealed to only in the case of some high point of nice and mysterious honour. But in the happier days you celebrate, it was called in aid, on common occasions. Even questions of right and property, you know, were determined at the barriers [a]: and brute force was allowed the most equitable, as well as shortest, way of deciding all disputes both concerning a man's estate and honour.

[a] There was an instance of this kind, and perhaps the latest upon record in our history, in the 13th year of the queen, when "a combat was appointed to have been fought for a certain manor, and demain lands belonging thereto, in *Kent*." The matter was compromised, in the end. But not till after the usual forms had been observed, by the two parties: of which we have a curious and circumstantial detail in *Holingshead's* chronicles, p. 1225.

You

You might obſerve too, interpoſed Dr. ARBUTHNOT, that this was the way in which thoſe fiercer diſputes concerning a miſtreſs, or a kingdom, were frequently decided. And, if this ſort of deciſion, in ſuch caſes, were ſtill in uſe among Chriſtian princes, you might call it perhaps a barbarous cuſtom: but would it be ever the worſe, do you think, for their good ſubjects?

PERHAPS it would not, returned Mr. ADDISON, in ſome inſtances. And yet will you affirm, that thoſe *good ſubjects* were in any enviable ſituation, under their fighting maſters? After all, allowing you to put the beſt conſtruction you can on theſe uſages of our forefathers,

"all we find
Is, that they did their work and din'd."

And, though ſuch feats may argue a ſound athletic conſtitution, you muſt excuſe

cuſe me, if I am not forward to entertain any high notions of their civility.

THEIR civility, ſaid Dr. ARBUTHNOT, is another conſideration. The HALL and TILT-YARD are certainly good proofs of what they are alledged for, the hoſpitality and bravery of our anceſtors. But it hath not been maintained, that theſe were their only virtues. On the contrary, it ſeems to me, that every flower of humanity, every elegance of art and genius, was cultivated amongſt them. For an inſtance, need we look any further than the LAKE, which in the flouriſhing times of this caſtle was ſo famous, and which we even now trace in the winding-bed of that fine meadow?

I DO not underſtand you, replied Mr. ADDISON. I can eaſily imagine what an embelliſhment that lake muſt have been to the caſtle; but am at a loſs to conceive what flowers of wit and ingenuity,

to

to uſe your own ænigmatical language, could be raiſed or ſo much as watered by it.

And have you then, returned Dr. Arbuthnot, ſo ſoon forgotten the large deſcription, you gave us juſt now, of the ſhews and pageants diſplayed on this lake? And can any thing better declare the art, invention, and ingenuity, of their conductors? Is not this canal as good a memorial of the ardour and ſucceſs with which the finer exerciſes of the mind were purſued in that time, as the tilt-yard, we have now left, is of the addreſs and dexterity ſhewn in thoſe of the body?

I remember, ſaid Mr. Addison, that many of the ſhews, intended for the queen's entertainment at this place, were exhibited on that canal. But as to any art or beauty of contrivance—

"You ſee none, I ſuppoſe."

the fount and ocean, the watry nymphs and demi-gods: and theſe were to play their part in their own element. Could any preparation be more artful for the panegyric deſigned on the naval glory of that reign? Or, could any repreſentation be more grateful to the queen of the ocean, as ELIZABETH was then called, than ſuch as expreſſed her ſovereignty in thoſe regions? Hence the ſea-green Nereids, the Tritons, and Neptune himſelf, were the proper actors in the drama. And the opportunity of this ſpacious lake gave the eaſieſt introduction and moſt natural appearance to the whole ſcenery. Let me add, too, in further commendation of the taſte which was ſhewn in theſe agreeable fancies, that the attributes and dreſſes of the deities themſelves were ſtudied with care; and the moſt learned poets of the time employed to make them ſpeak and act in character. So that an old *Greek* or *Roman* might have applauded the contrivance,

vance, and have almoſt fancied himſelf aſſiſting at a religious ceremony in his own country.

And, to ſhew you that all this propriety was intended by the deſigner himſelf, and not imagined at pleaſure by his encomiaſt; I remember, that, when ſome years after, the earl of Hertford had the honour to receive the queen at his ſeat in *Hampſhire*, becauſe he had no ſuch canal as this in readineſs on the occaſion, he ſet on a vaſt number of hands to hollow a baſon in his park for that purpoſe. With ſo great diligence and ſo exact a decorum were theſe entertainments conducted!

Did not I tell you, interpoſed Mr. Addison, addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Digby, to what an extravagance the doctor's admiration of the antient times would carry him? Could you have expected all this harangue on the art, elegance,

gance, and decorum, of THE PRINCELY PLEASURES OF KENELWORTH [*b*]? And muſt not it divert you to ſee the unformed genius of that age tricked out in the graces of *Roman* or even *Attic* politeneſs?

MR. DIGBY acknowledged, it was very generous in the doctor to repreſent in ſo fair a light the amuſements of the ruder ages. But I was thinking, ſaid he, to what cauſe it could poſſibly be owing, that theſe pagan fancies had acquired ſo general a conſideration in the days of ELIZABETH.

THE general paſſion for theſe fancies, returned Dr. ARBUTHNOT, was a natural conſequence of the revival of learning. The firſt books, that came into vogue,

[*b*] Alluding to a tract, ſo called, by GASCOIGNE, an attendant on the court, and poet of that time, who hath given us a narrative of the entertainments that paſſed on this occaſion at *Kenelworth*.

were

were the poets. And nothing could be more amuſing to rude minds, juſt opening to a taſte of letters, than the fabulous ſtory of the pagan gods, which is conſtantly interwoven in every piece of antient poetry. Hence the imitative arts of *ſculpture*, *painting*, and *poetry* were immediately employed in theſe pagan exhibitions. But this was not all. The firſt artiſts in every kind were, of *Italy*; and it was but natural for them to act theſe fables over again on the very ſpot, that had firſt produced them. Theſe, too, were the maſters to the reſt of *Europe*. So that *faſhion* concurred, with the other prejudices of the time, to recommend this practice to the learned.

From the men of art and literature the enthuſiaſm ſpread itſelf to the great; whoſe ſupreme delight it was to ſee the wonders of the old poetical ſtory brought forth, and realized, as it were, before

them [c]. And what, in truth, could they do better? For, if I were not a little

[c] Hence then it is that a celebrated a dramatic writer of thoſe days repreſents the entertainment of MASKS and SHEWS, as the higheſt indulgence that could be provided for a luxurious and happy monarch. His words are theſe;

" Muſic and poetry are his delight.
Therefore I'll have *Italian* maſques by night,
Sweet ſpeeches, comedies, and pleaſing ſhews;
And in the day, when he ſhall walk abroad,
Like SYLVAN NYMPHS, my pages ſhall be clad:
My men, like SATYRS, grazing on the lawns,
Shall with their goat-feet dance the antic hay:
Sometimes a lovely boy in DIAN's ſhape,
With hair, that gilds the water as it glides,
Crownets of pearls about his naked arms,
And in his ſportful hands an olive-tree,
Shall bathe him in a ſpring, and there hard by
One like ACTÆON, peeping through the grove,
Shall by the angry Goddeſs be transform'd—
Such things as theſe beſt pleaſe his majeſty.
MARLOW's Edward II.

And how exactly this dramatiſt painted the humour of the times, we may ſee from the entertainment provided, not many years after, for the reception of King JAMES at *Althrop* in *Northamptonſhire*; where this very deſign of *Sylvan Nymphs*, *Satyrs*, and ACTÆON was executed in a maſque by B. JONSON.

afraid

afraid of your raillery, I ſhould deſire to know what courtly amuſements even of our time are comparable to the ſhews and maſques, which were the delight and improvement of the court of ELIZABETH. I ſay, the *improvement*; for, beſides that theſe ſhews were not in the number of the INERUDITÆ VOLUPTATES, ſo juſtly characteriſed and condemned by a wiſe antient, they were even highly uſeful and inſtructive. Theſe devices, compoſed out of the poetical hiſtory, were not only the vehicles of compliment to the great on certain ſolemn occaſions, but of the ſoundeſt moral leſſons, which were artfully thrown in, and recommended to them by the charm of poetry and numbers. Nay, ſome of theſe maſques were moral dramas in form, where the virtues and vices were imperſonated. We know the caſt of their compoſition by what we ſee of theſe fictions in the next reign; and have reaſon to conceive of them with reverence when we find the names of

FLETCHER and JONSON [d] to some of them. I say nothing of JONES and LAWES, though all the elegance of their respective arts was called in to assist the poet in the contrivance and execution of these entertainments.

AND, now the poets have fallen in my way, let me further observe, that the manifest superiority of this class of writers in ELIZABETH's reign, and that of her successor, over all others who have succeeded to them, is, among other reasons, to be ascribed to the taste which then prevailed for these moral representations. This taught them to animate and impersonate every thing. Rude minds, you will say, naturally give into this practice. Without doubt. But art and genius do not disdain to cultivate and

[d] Whom his friend Mr. SELDEN characterizeth in this manner,

"Omnia carmina doctus
Et calles mythos plasmata et historiam."

TIT. OF HON. p. 466.

improve it. Hence it is, that we find in the phraſeology and mode of thinking of that time, and of that time only, the eſſence of the trueſt and ſublimeſt poetry.

WITHOUT doubt, Mr. ADDISON ſaid, the poetry of that time is of a better taſte than could well have been expected from its barbariſm in other inſtances. But ſuch prodigies as SHAKESPEAR and SPENCER would do great things in any age, and under every diſadvantage.

MOST certainly they would, returned Dr. ARBUTHNOT, but not the things that you admire ſo much in theſe immortal writers. And, if you will excuſe the intermixture of a little philoſophy in theſe ramblings, I will attempt to account for it.

THERE is, I think, in the revolutions of taſte and language, a certain point,

which is more favourable to the purpoſes of poetry, than any other. It may be difficult to fix this point with exactneſs. But we ſhall hardly miſtake in ſuppoſing it lies ſomewhere between the rude eſſays of uncorrected fancy, on the one hand, and the refinements of reaſon and ſcience, on the other.

And ſuch appears to have been the condition of our language in the age of Elizabeth. It was pure, ſtrong, and perſpicuous, without affectation. At the ſame time, the high figurative manner, which fits a language ſo peculiarly for the uſes of the poet, had not yet been controlled by the proſaic genius of philoſophy and logic. Indeed this character had been ſtruck ſo deeply into the *Engliſh* tongue, that it was not to be removed by any ordinary improvements in either: the reaſon of which might be, the delight which was taken by the *Engliſh* very early in their old MYSTERIES and

and MORALITIES; and the continuance of the ſame ſpirit in ſucceeding times, by means of their MASQUES and TRIUMPHS. And ſomething like this, I obſerve, attended the progreſs of the *Greek* and *Roman* poetry; which was the *trueſt* poetry, on the clown's maxim in SHAKESPEAR, becauſe it was *the moſt feigning* [e]. It had its riſe, you know, like ours, from religion: and pagan religion, of all others, was the propereſt to introduce and encourage a ſpirit of allegory and moral fiction. Hence we eaſily account for the allegoric caſt of their old dramas, which have a great reſemblance to our antient moralities. NECESSITY is brought in as a *perſon of the drama*, in one of ÆSCHYLUS's plays; and DEATH, in one of EURIPIDES; to ſay nothing of

[e] *Sacrifices*, ſays PLUTARCH, *without chorusses and without muſic, we have known: but for poetry, without fable and without fiction, we know of no ſuch thing.* Θυσίας μὲν ἀχόρους καὶ ἀναύλους ἴσμεν· ἀπ ἴσμεν δὲ ποίησιν ἄμυθον καὶ ἀψευδῆ ποίησιν. De aud. poët. vol. i. p. 19.

many

many ſhadowy perſons in the comedies of ARISTOPHANES. The truth is, the pagan religion *deified* every thing, and delivered theſe deities into the hand of their painters, ſculptors, and poets. In like manner, chriſtian ſuperſtition, or, if you will, modern barbariſm, *impersonated* every thing; and theſe perſons, in proper form, ſubſiſted for ſome time on the ſtage, and almoſt to our days, in the maſques. Hence the pictureſque ſtyle of our old poetry; which looks ſo fanciful in SPENSER, and which SHAKESPEAR's genius hath carried to the utmoſt ſublimity.

I WILL not deny, ſaid Mr. ADDISON, but there may be ſomething in this deduction of the cauſes, by which you account for the ſtrength and grandeur of the *Engliſh* poetry, unpoliſhed as it ſtill was in the hands of ELIZABETH's great poets. But for the maſques themſelves—

YOU

You forget, I believe, *one*, interrupted Dr. ARBUTHNOT, which does your favourite poet, MILTON, almoſt as much honour, as his *Paradiſe Loſt*.—But I have no mind to engage in a further vindication of theſe fancies. I only conclude that the taſte of the age, the ſtate of letters, the genius of the *Engliſh* tongue, was ſuch as gave a manlineſs to their compoſitions of all ſorts, and even an elegance to thoſe of the lighter forms, which we might do well to emulate, and not deride, in this æra of politeneſs.

BUT I am aware, as you ſay, I have been tranſported too far. My deſign was only to hint to you, in oppoſition to your invective againſt the memory of the old times, awakened in us by the ſight of this caſtle, that what you object to is capable of a much fairer interpretation. You have a proof of it, in two or three inſtances; in their feſtivals, their exer-

ciſes,

ciſes, and their poetical fictions: or, to expreſs myſelf in the claſſical forms, you have ſeen by this view of their CONVIVIAL, GYMNASTIC, and MUSICAL character, that the times of ELIZABETH may paſs for golden, notwithſtanding what a fondneſs for this age of baſer metal may incline us to repreſent it.

IN the mean time, theſe ſmaller matters have drawn me aſide from my main purpoſe. What ſurprized me moſt, purſued he, was to hear you ſpeak ſo ſlightly, I would not call it by a worſe name, of the GOVERNMENT of ELIZABETH. Of the manners and taſtes of different ages, different perſons, according to their views of things, will judge very differently. But plain facts ſpeak ſo ſtrongly in favour of the policy of that reign, and the ſuperior talents of the ſovereign, that I could not but take it for the wantonneſs of oppoſition in you to eſpouſe the contrary opinion. And, now I am warmed by

by this ſlight ſkirmiſh, I am even bold enough to dare you to a defence of it; if, indeed, you were ſerious in advancing that ſtrange paradox. At leaſt, I could wiſh to hear upon what grounds you would juſtify ſo ſevere an attack on the reverend adminiſtration of that reign, ſupported by the wiſdom of ſuch men as CECIL and WALSINGHAM, under the direction of ſo accompliſhed a princeſs as our ELIZABETH. Your manner of defending even the wrong ſide of the queſtion will, at leaſt, be entertaining. And, I think, I may anſwer for our young friend, that his curioſity will lead him to join me in this requeſt to you.

MR. ADDISON ſaid, He did not expect to be called to ſo ſevere an account of what had eſcaped him on this ſubject. But, though I was ever ſo willing, continued he, to oblige you, this is no time or place for entering on ſuch a controverſy. We have not yet completed the round

round of theſe buildings. And I would fain, methinks, make the circuit of that pleaſant meadow. Beſides its having been once, in another form, the ſcene of thoſe ſhows you deſcribed ſo largely to us, it will deſerve to be viſited for the ſake of the many fine views which, as we wind along it, we may promiſe to ourſelves of theſe ruins.

You forget my bad legs, ſaid Dr. ARBUTHNOT ſmiling; otherwiſe, I ſuppoſe, we can neither of us have any diſlike to your propoſal. But, as you pleaſe: let us deſcend from theſe heights. We may reſume the converſation, as we walk along; and eſpecially, as you propoſe, when we get down into that valley.

The End of the FIRST VOLUME.